

## Energy job for Mr Biffen in Thatcher team changes

Thatcher has reconstructed her Shadow promoting Mr John Biffen, an al right-winger, from the back benches spokesman on energy. Mr Whitelaw, the

deputy Conservative leader, gets the additional post of shadow Home Secretary; Mr Gilmour exchanges home affairs for defence; Mr Pym returns as shadow Minister of Agriculture.

## Mr Heath's friends get share of posts

Wood

Biffen, one of the fluent right-wingers on economic questions, is brought into the cabinet last night by a deliberately not very adventurous change to the Conservative bench in what she will be a decisive year

is not a reconstruction of the Conservative Cabinet. Mr Whitelaw, a leader and principal spokesman on energy, now comes shadow Home

Mr Francis Pym, in health, returns as Minister of Agriculture. Mr Ian Gilmour, the shadow Foreign Secretary, succeeds Mr Eldon

Mr Biffen's appointment is regarded as the most significant in the list. A farmer's son who won his way to Cambridge and became a successful City figure as an economist and a director

Wilson's ministers. Mr Whitelaw will face Mr Roy Jenkins, Mr Gilmour will face Mr Mason at a time when defence expenditure is once again being cut, and Mr Biffen is to be matched against Mr Wedgwood Benn on energy.

Although Mrs Thatcher has no taste for butchery she has downgraded three former members of the Shadow Cabinet. Mr George Younger, a former chairman of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party, loses the defence portfolio and returns to the back benches. Mr Norman Fowler, who was making a name for himself as Mrs Castle's opposite number with responsibility for health and social services, becomes shadow Minister of Transport below the line. Mr Michael Jopling ceases to be number one on agriculture and will work under Mr Pym, as it was agreed he should once Mr Pym had recovered his health.

Mr Fowler need not feel aggrieved. Mrs Thatcher has explained to him that she wants to broaden the experience of younger members of her team, as Mr Heath broadened hers by letting them specialize in a variety of subjects before they are eventually called on to run a department when the Conservative Party assumes power again. For that reason Mr Biffen has been placed on the front bench as he has been mainly concentrated on economics, taxation, and trade, now turns from energy to health and the social services.

Mr Biffen's appointment is regarded as the most significant in the list. A farmer's son who won his way to Cambridge and became a successful City figure as an economist and a director

of a firm of management consultants, he was for some years a lieutenant of Mr Enoch Powell, at any rate on economic subjects.

Later, he ceased to welcome the description "Powellite" and began to make his own independent reputation among Conservative backbenchers as a monetarist and an economist who followed economic logic to an unflinching conclusion. He was elected to the 1922 Committee and became a distinctive and deeply respected voice propounding free market doctrine.

Another right-winger, Mr John Biggs-Davison, who has been understanding Mr Airey Neave on Northern Ireland affairs, is now formally appointed number two. Mr Neave combines his portfolio with the responsibility of managing Mrs Thatcher's private office, and he will now have a full-time assistant on the front bench.

In much the same way Mr Ian Percival, who has virtually been acting as shadow Solicitor General, is now formally confirmed in the post. Mr Marcus Fox, who is at present in Tehran, has lost his post as transport spokesman and is out of touch with Westminster; but he will be given a new appointment in due course.

energy and aggression are values or Mr Nicholas Scott, as representatives of what might be called the Macleod wing of the party.

For it was being remarked last night that the Shadow Cabinet continues to be, in its distribution of weight, more the creation of Mr Heath than of Mrs Thatcher, and that therefore there need be no prejudice against some of the Heath men who continue to be excluded.

In fact Mrs Thatcher approached neither Mr Heath nor Mr Walker. But it must be confessed that both are immensely enjoying their backbench freedom to speak at large, and prefer it to the collective responsibility and the limitation to one subject that membership of the Shadow Cabinet involves.

Except for Mr Neave, Mrs Thatcher's private office is now under new management. She began with two parliamentary private secretaries, Mr William Sheldon and Mr Fergus Montgomery, both of whom served under Mr Heath as campaign managers in her contest for the leadership. Mr Sheldon left some months ago, and last night Mr Montgomery left so that he can be more active in his professional subject of education. Now Mr John Stanley joins Mr Adam Butler as Mrs Thatcher's aide.

Loyalty pledge: Mr Younger, who returns to the back benches, said he would remain a loyal lieutenant of Mrs Thatcher. He was "naturally very disappointed" to lose the defence portfolio, but he realized that changes had to be made from time to time. "This will enable me to play a stronger part in Scottish affairs", he added.

Shadow Cabinet list, page 4



Mr John Robertson: Joining the new Scottish Labour party

## Warning to Labour on devolution

By Michael Hatfield,  
Political Staff

Labour backbenchers were told last night that they could say goodbye to the Labour Party in Scotland if they did not accept the devolution White Paper.

The warning came from Mr Ross, Secretary of State for Scotland, who admitted having some reservations himself, at a meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Mr Ross, after listening to criticisms during the meeting, said: "If you now reject the White Paper, the credibility of the Labour Party in Scotland will go."

"If you do not agree with this White Paper you can say goodbye to the Labour Party in Scotland and probably White Paper as well," Mr Ross was not implying resignation but the fact that the Scottish National Party could overrun his Kilmarlock constituency.

The main message to the Government coming from the meeting was that the decision to vote with the Government's "take note" motion on Monday did not mean that they agreed with the proposals contained within it.

Earlier, a second Scottish Labour MP, Mr John Robertson, announced that he is joining the Scottish Labour Party, whose inaugural meeting will be held on Sunday.

Mr Robertson (Paisley) joins Mr James Stirling (Ayrshire, South) who yesterday declined an invitation from his colleagues in the left-wing Tribune group to attend a special meeting on devolution.

The defections present no immediate threat to the Government's overall majority of one because they will continue to receive the Labour whip until such time the party's national executive committee concludes that the Scottish Labour Party is a rival political organization. That decision might well depend on whether the Scottish Labour Party says at the weekend that it will field candidates against the Labour Party.

Mr Robertson said yesterday: "Throughout the Christmas recess I have struggled with my conscience. To travel in the general election, to remain bound and imprisoned by old loyalties: that has been the agony of my choice."

He added that the difficulty was resolved by the vote of this week's debate on devolution and the speeches by Mr Wilson and Mr Stirling.

He said: "After considering the content and philosophy expounded by each, and taking into account the hostility which important members of the Parliamentary Labour Party continue to demonstrate against the basic concept of a meaningful devolution, which calls into question the very passage of the Bill, I have decided that the only place for Scottish socialists who want socialist policies applied, and who want a strong Scottish Parliament with economic powers, is in the SLP."

"Tribune" group attack, page 4

Letters, page 15

Leader, page 15

On devolution, from Dr David King and others; on the film industry, from Mr Michael Winner.

Leading articles: The balance of détente; Atmospheric pollution; Lessons of a baby's death.

Feature pages 13 and 14

Edward Mortimer on why Israel's "doves" fear war may be unavoidable; Dermot Glynn on a misplaced attack on British management; Healy on the mistakes that can cost children's lives.

Arts, page 11

Philip French on new films in London: Irving Wardle on *Plunder* (National Theatre); Stanley Reynolds on *Just a Nimmie* (BBC 2); John Percival on *Cinderella* (Coven Garden).

Professor Hamilton Harridge; Lord Rockley; Colonel Alas Kipli; Dr Robert Forgan.

## Angolan anti-Marxist army said to have totally collapsed

From Patrick Brogan

Washington, Jan 15

A secret cable saying that one of the anti-communist militant groups in Angola had collapsed was reported today to have been sent by Dr Henry Kissinger, the Secretary of State, to the American representative to Nato.

The report, put out by the Scripps-Howard newspapers, said the National Liberation Front (FNL) forces had collapsed and the organization's leaders were fleeing to Zaire. It said Dr Kissinger had instructed his representative to urge the allies to speak out against the "massive Soviet intervention in Angola" and to encourage moderate African states quietly to do the same.

The State Department said today that it did not believe that the FNL had collapsed.

A spokesman said that its information was that fighting was continuing against the Marxist Popular Movement (MPLA) in the north of

Angola. The spokesman refused to discuss the contents of the alleged cable, claiming that spokesmen never did discuss such things.

Johannesburg, Jan 15.—The MPLA, spearheaded by Cuban troops, has mounted an offensive on five fronts, according to reports reaching Johannesburg today.

Heavy fighting was reported in northern Angola with a series of MPLA victories. Barrios also were reported in four separate regions of southern Angola.

In the south, pro-western Unita troops clashed with MPLA forces between Luso and Henrique de Carvalho, near Texeira Sousa, north of Novo Redondo in the Gabela area, and around Mussende, between Huambo (formerly Nova Lisboa) and Malanje.

The MPLA offensive appears to be aimed at winning quick military victories to make up for its diplomatic defeat last weekend at the summit meeting of the Organization of

African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa. Pro-MPLA leaders were unable to win majority support for OAU recognition.

The MPLA was reported to have captured the vital port of Ambriz, the FNLA's military headquarters, and its key airfield. It also claims to have captured Ambriz, near Ambriz.

A reported 7,000 Cuban combat troops are spearheading the MPLA offensive with Soviet tanks and heavy artillery. Ambriz was reported to have been abandoned by the FNLA after troops were shelled by Soviet tanks, strafed by helicopter gunships and subjected to concentrated rocket attacks.

In Zaire, a FNLA Political Bureau member, Mr Paulo Tuba, was quoted as saying the movement would resort to international terrorism to keep its cause alive. He specifically threatened terrorist bombings of African embassies in Congo, Brazzaville, Guinea and other supporters of the MPLA.—AP.

Refugees turned away, page 9

## Baby died through 'callous neglect'

By Pat Healy

Social Services Correspondent

Steven Meurs, the King's Lynn baby who starved to death at the age of 15 months in April last year, died because of "callous neglect" by his mother, the report of the official inquiry into his death said yesterday. But his life might have been saved if there had not been a disastrous breakdown in communication between the various officials involved with his family.

The report points out that Dr T. W. D. Slattery, the family doctor treating Mrs Sandra Meurs, the boy's mother, for depression, did not know that a health visitor attached to his own practice had been called in to see her son. The health visitor, Mrs. M. J. Meurs, had been called in to see her son, the boy's mother, for depression, did not know that a health visitor attached to his own practice had been called in to see her son. The health visitor, Mrs. M. J. Meurs, had been called in to see her son, the boy's mother, for depression, did not know that a health visitor attached to his own practice had been called in to see her son.

The senior social worker supervising the field worker, Mrs. M. J. Meurs, failed to spot the danger signals and call a case conference. An inspector of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, called in by a publican's wife who had seen the child in a drunken state, did not call for three days and never gained admission to the house in spite of 13 attempts.

The NSPCC inspector did not tell anyone else of his involvement.

The report, the first to investigate the death of a child since the Maria Colwell report

directed public attention to such tragedies, is strongly critical of most of the officials involved. But it makes clear that there was no cause for concern about Steven Meurs until a few months before his death.

Mrs Meurs, who is now serving a three-year sentence for her son's manslaughter, was being visited by a social worker because she was caring for two children of her son. Her husband and the father of her son's children were both in prison. Mrs Meurs, her own two children and the two fostered children were living on social security.

The report points out that none of the other three children was harmed while in Mrs Meurs's care. The first sign that Steven was being neglected came in February, 1974. Mrs Meurs had gone along to a public house, and the child began to cry. His mother could not be found, but the publican's wife called and found him "very thin and covered in sores". She called the NSPCC, whose inspector, Mr R. W. Hardy, failed to see Steven. The report says: "Mr Hardy clearly failed to live up to the standards expected of him."

The critical period came in March, 1974. Mr Peter Meurs, the boy's grandfather, who, the report says, was always hostile towards his daughter-in-law, received an anonymous telephone call on March 14 and called at Mrs Meurs's home. He found Steven lying in his cot.

Continued on page 2, col 3

## Call for state sector cuts by Sir Keith Joseph

By Tim Congdon

"Monetary contraction in a mixed economy strangles the private sector unless the state sector contracts with it and reduces its take from the national income. Holding down the money supply is not by itself sufficient for economic success."

That is the central theme of a speech by Sir Keith Joseph, MP for Leeds, North-east, on "Monetarism is not enough", given at the London Business School, yesterday. The speech was the first of this year's Stockton Lectures.

Sir Keith argued that monetarism could be used only for solving monetary problems. "Whether you try to use excessive monetary demand as a means of overcoming real obstacles to full employment and growth, or use deflationary pressure to achieve specific non-monetary objectives, you are misusing monetary policy," he said.

The speech is important because Sir Keith, who has special responsibility in the Shadow Cabinet for research, has put forward his ideas for dealing with British industrial decline, which are likely to have a strong influence on Conservative Party thinking on those issues.

Sir Keith considered that the reason for slow growth and declining employment in industry was not too little intervention, but too much. It is not enough, he said, to call solely for control of the money supply, because this is not part of industrial policy. Rather, it is necessary to reduce government interference and to cut back the public sector.

Indeed, to rely on monetary restraint to curb excess demand could cause serious damage to the private sector, while leaving the public sector unscathed, Sir Keith said.

He pointed out that the money supply acted as a constraint only on the private sector. "If the whole economy were private, then all firms

Turn to page 17, col 1



Active MPs getting new or changed shadow portfolios in Mrs Thatcher's reshuffle include (left to right): Mr Pym, comes agriculture spokesman; Mr Biffen, energy; Mr Gilmour, defence; Mr Jenkins, health and social services; Mr Eldon, European affairs; and Mr Biggs-Davison, Northern Ireland (assisting Mr Neave).

## vil Service incomes itement 'misleading'

id Young

News Staff

that Civil Service pay 40 per cent, compared a national average for manual workers of 27.5 per cent during the 12 months to 1975, and not by 26 per cent, as stated a month ago.

Lord Privy Seal, has de by Income Data Service independent wage-price publication, examined Lord Shepherson's statement as part of a critique of pay and pensions in the Civil Service. It figures he gave are servants received averaging 32.5 per cent, their first substantial since January, 1974; sed as an annual rate, essed averaged 26 per cent, IDS points out New Earnings Survey, provided the national rate of 27.5 per cent, red that during the year

ending April, 1975, clerical grades received increases averaging 20.2 per cent and executive grades 13.7 per cent from threshold payments, incremental increases and increased London weighting.

IDS adds that it estimates that if the settlement made in April, 1975, had been concluded in time to influence the earnings survey it would, together with the other increases, received during the year, have meant average increases amounting to 40 per cent.

The operation of the fair comparison system on which civil service pay is based is also questioned. IDS points out that, at least at the highest levels, other countries do not maintain that principle, that it gives civil servants an advantage at times of inflation and that it operates too selectively. IDS suggests that, in other countries the security of employment of civil servants is taken into account during wage calculations.

## Dr Luns takes hopeful view of cod war

Reykjavik, Jan 15.—Dr

Joseph Luns, the Nato secretary general, said in Reykjavik today that he was taking a message to the British Government from Iceland which he hoped would ease the strained relations between the two countries over fishing rights.

"I am not without hope that the message I carry to the British Government may serve to diffuse the present dangerous situation on the fishing grounds," Dr Luns told a press conference. He said he had two days of talks with Mr Einarsson, the Icelandic Prime Minister.

Dr Luns flies back to Brussels tomorrow morning and will meet Mr Callaghan, the Foreign Secretary, in Brussels on Monday to relay the Icelandic message.

Sources close to the Icelandic Government said that Dr Luns had probably persuaded Iceland to delay breaking off relations

and to negotiate a tentative agreement on fishing rights.

Dr Luns said he hoped that the Icelandic Government would study closely the British reaction before taking any drastic action. He added that the greatest obstacle to solution was the presence of British warships on the fishing grounds.

He was not bringing to the British any "specific proposals, but possibilities to normalize contacts between the two governments which might lead to a negotiated settlement."

On board HMS Leader, Jan 15.—The British tanker Tidepool, said to be refuelling the Navy's trawlers off Iceland, was heading for Scotland today after a freak wave buckled its bow searchlight door casing, causing a leak.

The wave hit the 14,130-ton tanker as it sailed through a heavy sea by gale force winds. UPI, Agence France-Presse and Reuter.

## ican takes a n line on missiveness

lea that permissiveness in n calls for more flexibility in nan Catholic Church on the of sexual morals is firmly by the Vatican in an uncom document published yesterday. The document, which is all roundly con- and an appeal is made to parents, artists and journalists at the young

Page 8

## luction moves up

ary cent rise in the Government's rry production index during y and November provides evidence that the recession in has passed its worst. The Statistical Office said that rial output has now at least out

Page 17

## ir tip warning

ry that filter-tipped cigarettes y less lung cancer but more eanse than plain untipped ones n advanced by Dr Nicholas if the Department of Health's epidemology unit at Oxford

Page 4

## HM Pollution Inspectorate

The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution urges the formation of a new national authority to control pollution. In its fifth report it says that pollution of the air cannot be looked at in isolation from pollution of land and water and suggests that the new body should be called Her Majesty's Pollution Inspectorate.

Page 7

## CIA journalists

The American Central Intelligence Agency has some 40 agents posing as journalists around the world, the Senate committee on intelligence is to reveal. But the committee will not publish their names; instead it will disclose the organizations for which they work.

Page 9

## Dilemma on grants

The Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham University says in his annual report that new research grants may have to be refused because their value is being eroded by inflation.

Page 4

## Saxony poll surprise

The first sensation of West Germany's general election year came from Lower Saxony, where the opposition candidate was elected state Prime Minister with implications for Herr Schmidt.

Page 8

## Banks' £325m boost

The Bank of England is to return £325m of special deposits to the banking system for just over three weeks to help to prevent a short-term rise in interest rates.

Page 17

## Madrid strike wave

The Spanish Cabinet met in an emergency session to discuss the growing strike wave in Madrid. The strikers were joined yesterday by telephone workers.

Page 8

Commons protest: Mr Wilson's view that the Government should decide which ministers may appear before select committees, led to angry exchanges in the Commons.

Peer fined: Lord Newborough, of Belan Fort, was fined for damaging a passing car.

Paris: Government report reveals that 16 million live in sub-standard housing in France.

Conveyancing: Legal executive accused of performing work that should have been done by a qualified solicitor.

Conferences and exhibition centres: A four-page Special Report on a multi-million-pound business that continues to flourish.

Home News 2, 4, 7

Court 16

Overseas News 9-10

Appointments 16

Diary 11

Engagements 13, 14

Features 12, 14

Law Report 23

Letters, page 15

On devolution, from Dr David King and others; on the film industry, from Mr Michael Winner.

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Professor Hamilton Harridge; Lord Rockley; Colonel Alas Kipli; Dr Robert Forgan.

Sports, pages 12 and 13

English: Peter West looks at the English and Welsh squads in training for tomorrow's match; Ice Skating: Russians tighten grip on ice dancing event at Eurovision.

Business News, pages 17-22

Stock markets: The temporary cut in special deposits helped equities to end firmly and the FT index closed 4.6 up, at 403.3. Gilt had a hectic session.

Financial Editor: The Bank's strategy on interest rates; Ocean's rights issue; East-west: Pensions; The threat being felt by western shipowners as a result of communist expansion on the world's cargo routes is examined by Michael Bailey.

## Ford case woman gets life

From Peter Stratford

New York, Jan 15

Mrs Sara Jane Moore, a former informant for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was sentenced to life imprisonment today for her attempt to assassinate President Ford on September 22 last.

Sentence was passed in San Francisco by Judge Samuel Conti who described Mrs Moore as having "no remorse". He added: "You are misguided, blaming society for your own faults. You can aim straight. The shot was to the right. If you had had a better gun, you would have shot the President."

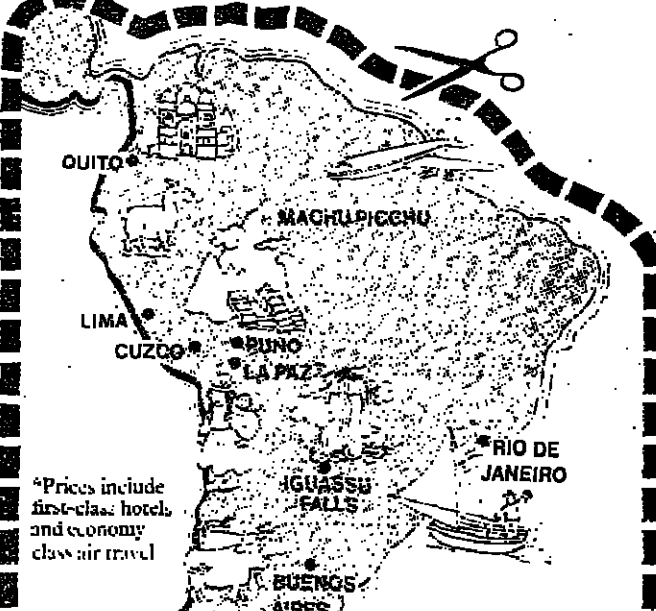
Mrs Moore was accused of trying to shoot Mr Ford as he came out of an hotel in San Francisco in the course of a tour of California. It was the second such incident in the course of a month. Earlier, Miss Lynette Fromme had tried to shoot Mr Ford in Sacramento. She has also been sentenced to life imprisonment.

Mrs Moore made a statement in court today in which she said she was not sorry for what she had done, except that she accomplished little more than to throw away the rest of my life.

She had made the attempt, she said, "because I expressed my feelings at the time and could have triggered the kind of chaos to bring the upheaval of needed change". She described how she had become involved with various radical groups, and this had made her sympathetic to "those who found their only recourse in violence."

Judge Conti commented: "I am certain of one thing. I know you would be standing here today if we had a capital punishment law. If you thought when you pulled the trigger you would be subject to capital punishment, you wouldn't have pulled it."

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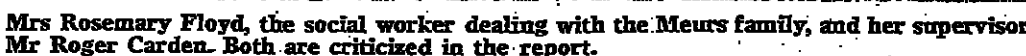
**By George Clark**

Oh, yes," he said, "ministers have no responsibility for any question are fully available, more available than ever before in the history of the House to select committees. It is not a

Mrs Thatcher rejects Mr Wilson's criticism of the last Conservative Government. She recalls that on some occasions several ministers gave evidence on a single select committee investigation.

continued from page 1

"The key failure lies in the lack of understanding of the overall situation which con-



failure to thrive", setting off the special procedures for dealing with non-accidental injury.

Mr Carden was defended yesterday both by Mr George Meredith, Director of Social

ing to go through several stages of the health authority hierarchy. But in practice the

**Stopping the mistakes, page 13**  
**Leading article, page 15**

demands for a reduction of £170m in the industry's bill this year.

Lord Wylie said: "I do not doubt the loyalty to the Crown of the Orange Lodge of Scotland or some of the other bodies mentioned, but to do this type of thing in the name of the Crown is an affront to the Crown of this country."

**By Martin Huckerby  
Political Staff**

The joint statement from No 10 added: "The participation of other political parties in the meeting is not intended to inhibit their subsequent freedom to comment on or debate

The meeting will come after the joint publication in London and Belfast of the White Paper setting out in detail the guidelines for debate in the Convention, which has been granted an extra four weeks to reach

Mr Donegan said there was determination on both sides of the border to see that movement "from one jurisdiction to another is not a way for the men of violence to frustrate and hamper the security forces."

Two other men were again remanded in custody on four charges.

By Pearce Wright  
Science Editor

existing programme may seem fruitless. It is not, for fresh decisions have still to be made about the scale, timing and nature of future power stations."

Up to £900m is being considered for the expansion of

Mr C. Allday, the managing director of British Nuclear Fuels, emphasized the commercial importance of the nuclear reprocessing business because the United Kingdom had one of the few sites in the world that could carry out the work.

## Rescue reequipment

RAR search and rescue services at Anglesey Leuchars, are to exchange Whirlwind helicopters this year for larger and longer-range Wessex machines.

[illegible]

From Harry Golombek  
Chess Correspondent

### Judge Humphreys

Italy's trade deficit rose to a provisional 204,000m lire (about £48m) in November last from provisional 197,000m lire in October and a deficit of 11,000m in November, 1974.

**By Our Arts Reporter**  
**Paying for the BBC's**

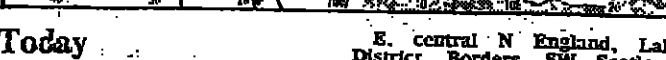
The minister had paid particular regard to the implications of the Government's devolution proposals under which

**107th birthday**  
Mrs Jane Mathie celebrates  
her 107th birthday tomorrow  
at Roadmeetings Hospital, Car-  
ryston, Strathclyde, where she  
has been a patient.

"It is a commitment greater than is required for the needs of breadwinning and man

development include small development projects, such as housing schemes of up to 1,000 sq metres total floor space, or industrial buildings of up to 1,500 sq metres total floor space, and most recreational buildings.

NOON TODAY Pressure is shown in millibars FRONTS Warm Cold Occluded



London SE, sun to dusk; light or moderate; sea slight.  
 England, East Angles, W Midlands, Irish Sea; Wind W, moderate or fresh; sea slight.  
 channel islands: Fog patches clearing, dry, sunny intervals; or fresh; sea slight.  
 wind variable light; max temp 11°C (46°F).

**Yesterday**  
 Wales, NW England, Isle of Man, N Ireland: Sunny intervals, 11°C (52°F); max. 6 am to pm, 11°C (52°F); min. 10°C (50°F).

NOON TODAY



...above average with near average  
...fall. Gales and snow are  
...ected to occur less often than  
...ual. Frost and fog are less  
...occur with less than average  
...frequency in Scotland, but above  
...average frequency elsewhere.

[illegible]



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Schwannstrasse 3, 4 Düsseldorf.

Finland: Kaivokatu 8, Helsinki 10.

France: 40, Avenue Hoche, 75 Paris 8, 5, Square Max Hymans, 75 Paris 15.

Ireland: Newstead, Clonskeagh, Dublin 14.

Israel: 14 Karibach Street, 64780 Tel Aviv.

Italy: Viale Fulvio Testi, 327, 20162 Milan.

Japan: Communication Science Corp., 8-6, 2 Chome, Kita-Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107.

Mexico: Calle Durango 167, Mexico City 7 D.F.

Netherlands: Bordewijkstraat 4, Rijswijk.

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South Africa: 2 Herbsir, New Doornfontein, Johannesburg.

Spain: Gisperi S.A., Provenza 206-208, Barcelona 11.

Sweden: Fack, 172 07 Sundbyberg.

Switzerland: Binzstrasse 18, 8027 Zürich.

United States of America: 1291 East Hillsdale Blvd., Foster City, California 94404.

Venezuela: Edif. Centro Colgate, Av. pp. de los Ruices, Urb. los Ruices, Caracas 107.

Yugoslavia: Fa. Commerce, Tilova Cesta S.T. 61, Ljubljana.



**Data Systems**

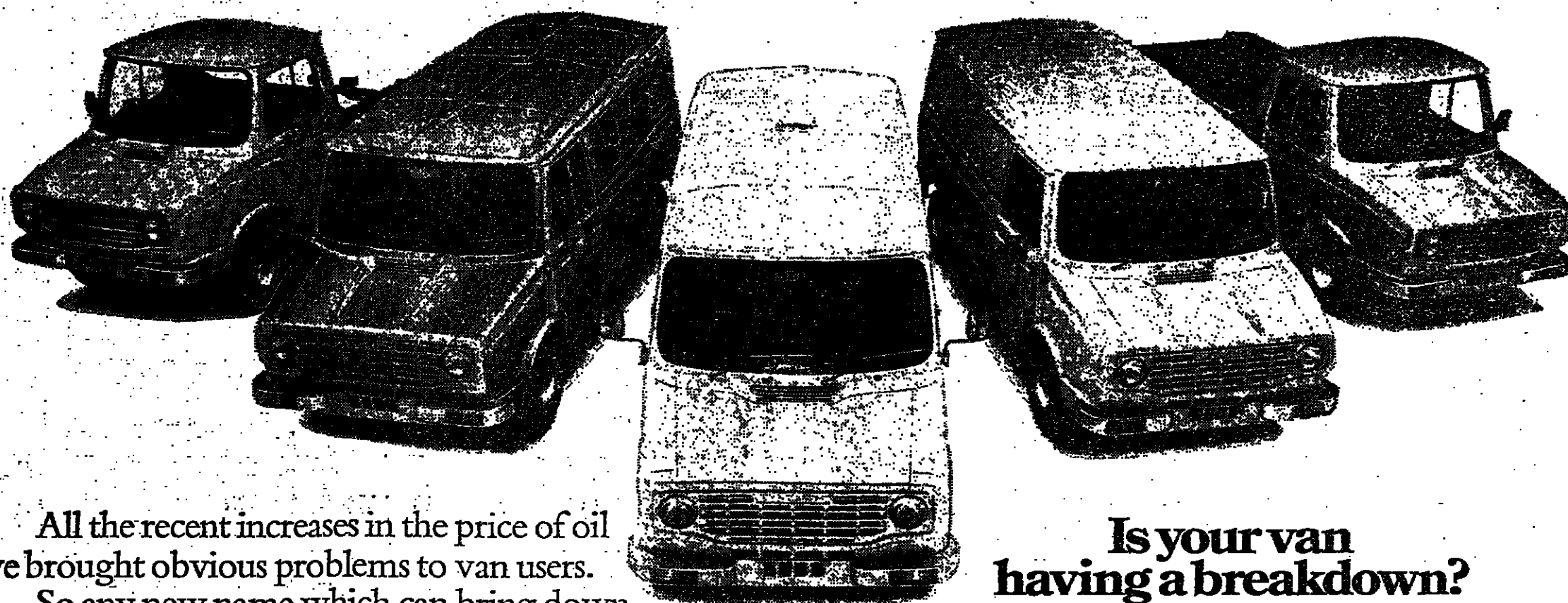
# PHILIPS







# Sherpa: It moves more, further, for less. And now it has Supercover.



All the recent increases in the price of oil have brought obvious problems to van users.

So any new name which can bring down those mountainous transport costs has got to be very good news.

That new name is Sherpa.

And every Sherpa now comes with Supercover, the most comprehensive after-sales commitment ever offered on any range of light commercial vehicles.

The Sherpa is the new range of vans from Leyland. It was born during the first dark days of the oil crisis, so a major priority in its design was fuel economy.

Which is why the Sherpa is incredibly cheap to run and operate.

## Do you fill the tank more than the van?

When "Truck" magazine road-tested the 1.8 litre petrol-engined Sherpa 240, this is what they said.

"Startling fuel figures emerged from our test, and try as we might we could not get it below 20 mpg... and the 28 mpg main road figure, in give and take conditions, was especially good."

But you don't have to take just "Truck's" test results.

Rank's Hovis MacDougall Bakeries recently bought the diesel-engined Sherpa 215 for Mother's Pride bread delivery duty.

And they were amazed by its average working mpg figures: 36.4 miles to every gallon over 22,000 trouble-free miles.

Needless to say, this was far better than any of its direct competitors could hope to achieve.

## Are your vans selling you short?

The fuel economy of the Sherpa is not, however, achieved at the expense of its load capacity.

The Sherpa van's 190 cubic foot loadspace (SAE) is highly competitive for a van of this class.

And because of the van's straighter sides and boxed-in wheel arches, every inch of that space can be easily utilized.

And as for loadlength, Sherpa's 8'6" maximum leaves most of its competitors far behind, and makes for faster, more efficient, loading and unloading — especially with the optional side loading door.

Large loadspace, long loadlength and amazing fuel economy.

All three work together to ensure that the Sherpa won't sell you short.

## Is your van having a breakdown?

The most economical van in the world is no use to anyone if it can't take the strain of hard work.

The Sherpa can take that strain, thanks to its enormously strong steel monocoque shell.

And all underbody box sections and sills are wax-injected and sealed to help prevent corrosion.

Also unlike many other vans, the Sherpa's engine is mounted forward of the driver. Obviously this makes maintenance much easier and the cab more comfortable.

And quite obviously a forward-mounted engine is more desirable from the safety aspect as well.

There are eight Sherpas in all, and they come in three payload ranges.

The Sherpa 185's can take up to 14 cwt, the 215's up to 19 cwt, and the 240's up to 23 cwt (dependent upon specification).

There are two engine options on the 185: 1622cc petrol and 1798cc diesel.

And three on the 215 and 240, with the additional option of a 1798cc petrol engine.

All three give good acceleration and a high cruising speed, but not at the expense of petrol economy.

So your deliveries are fast as well as economical.

And whether you want panel vans or pick ups, crew buses or minibuses, chassis cabs, or even mobile home conversions, there's a Sherpa in the range that can be easily tailored for almost any job.

## Let a Leyland expert solve your van fleet problems.

In these hard times, it may seem difficult to find a vehicle which makes sound economic sense.

But, undeniably, the Sherpa does.

It's cheaper to run, cheaper to maintain, and cheaper to buy than the vast majority of its competitors.

So call or write to Light Commercial Sales at Fletchamstead Highway, Coventry CV4 9DB. (Tel: 0203-755111. Ext. 720.)

And they will examine your fleet problems and make a recommendation as to the best solution.

That solution may not always include a team of Sherpas.

But given its many virtues, do not be surprised if it does.

**Sherpa**   
From Leyland Cars. With Supercover.







## NEWS

## 1 for new authority control pollution royal commission

Wright  
to secrecy and the  
of a new national  
to control pollution  
by the Royal Com-  
mission on Environmen-  
tal Pollution in its  
fifth report, yester-  
day. The report, which  
comes after an  
arrangement by the  
at, into arrangements  
air pollution, which  
subject recently to  
discuss.

The report the com-  
missioner: "Pollution of  
must be looked at in  
from pollution of land  
The reduction of  
to the atmosphere can  
an increase in wastes  
posed of on land or  
to water, and vice  
versa."

The principal recom-  
mendation among the 94  
in the report is for a  
national authority to  
control pollution. The  
Pollution Inspectorate  
cover all forms of  
pollution, whether  
solid, from industrial  
or present technolo-  
gical problems.  
The report will be to  
close collaboration  
the central authority  
local authorities dealing  
pollution.

The report, chairman  
an Flowers, chairman  
of the commission, said  
the report was because  
of criticism made for  
the of the Alkali Inspec-  
torate. Given there are only  
three in their staff, they  
cannot do the job. But one  
of them is almost  
in their attitude,  
this is why their rela-  
tions with local authorities  
have been at fault.

The commission was  
set up by the inspectorate's  
policy of cooperation  
with local authorities  
and it worked to the

general benefit of pollution  
control. The commission  
thought that prosecution should  
remain a last resort.

Nevertheless a serious mis-  
take was made last year in  
incorporating the Alkali  
Inspectorate with the new  
Health and Safety Executive.  
He believed it was a  
totally misguided manoeuvre  
because there was a clear  
conflict of interest in looking  
after people at work and in  
safeguarding the environment.

Yet he preferred the way the  
inspectorate worked rather  
than accepting suggestions  
from the European Economic  
Community for setting air  
quality standards.

The method of control in the  
United Kingdom is to establish  
"best practicable means". The  
commissioners are unhappy  
about some of the ways in  
which the system works in  
practice, but they are satisfied  
that the approach is inherently  
superior to control by  
nationally fixed and rigid  
emission standards. They  
argue: "The realities of pollu-  
tion control require a con-  
tinuing balance to be struck  
between the costs and benefits  
of pollution abatement for  
industry and society."

They are anxious about some  
defects. For one thing, the  
method often appears imprecise  
and inaccessible to the out-  
sider. The judgment of costs  
and benefits requires a tech-  
nical assessment involving  
financial, economic and scien-  
tific factors that are not always  
readily apparent.

Nevertheless the commission  
is convinced so much of the  
merits of the approach that  
"best practicable means" that  
it recommends its adoption in  
the control of other forms of  
industrial pollution.

Royal Commission on Environmen-  
tal Pollution, Fifth Report  
(Stationery Office, £1.75p. Com-  
mand 6371).

Leading article, page 15

## Three in court on corruption charges

From Ronald Kershaw  
Bradford

Mr Edward Newby, aged 63,  
the leader of West Yorkshire  
County Council and a former  
Lord Mayor of Bradford,  
appeared at Bradford City  
Magistrates' Court yesterday  
on corruption and conspiracy  
charges connected with the  
Poulson case. Also accused with  
Mr Newby were William Cliff-  
ford Brown, aged 66, Bradford  
city architect for 20 years, until  
March, 1970, and Miss Mary  
Elizabeth Fenelon, aged 60,  
a former assistant to Mr Brown.

All three were remanded on  
bail until March 25: Mr Newby  
and Mr Brown each in £500  
with a surety of £500, and Miss  
Fenelon in her own recognisance  
of £250.

All three are charged with  
conspiring with John Poulson  
and Thomas Daniel Smith be-  
tween 1960 and 1972 that Mr  
Poulson should corruptly make  
and all three should corruptly  
receive gifts and considerations  
made for the purpose of influ-  
encing the conduct of Edward  
Newby by virtue of his mem-  
bership of Bradford City  
Council and the conduct of Mr  
Brown and Miss Fenelon by  
virtue of their employment with  
Bradford City Council in relation  
to building projects in which  
the council was, or was  
likely to be, concerned.

Mr Brown and Miss Fenelon  
also each face four corruption  
charges involving the receipt  
of gifts or considerations.



Prince unveiled: Admiral of the Fleet Lord Mountbatten of  
Burma unveiling a new portrait of the Prince of Wales at  
the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, yesterday. The artist,  
Mr John Gilroy, is on the right.

## Government approves housing cooperatives

By Christopher Warman  
Local Government  
Correspondent

The formation of housing co-  
operatives on council estates  
and in the housing association  
sector receives government  
approval in a circular to local  
authorities published today.

It coincides with the publi-  
cation of the report of the  
working party on housing co-  
operatives, set up in August,  
1974, by the Minister for Hous-  
ing and Construction, which  
strongly recommends their  
adoption. The working party,  
under the chairmanship of Mr  
Harold Campbell, adds a word  
of caution.

It concludes that "coopera-  
tive housing, for all its im-  
portant advantages, is neither an  
easy way nor a quick way of  
providing additional homes. On  
the contrary, it requires care-  
ful, thorough implementation,  
with access to good manage-  
ment and advice."

In its circular the Govern-  
ment agrees that encourage-  
ment should be given to the  
introduction of cooperatives on  
local authority estates, initially  
in the form of pilot schemes,  
where that can be done with-  
out extra total cost. It gives  
detailed guidance for local  
authorities wishing to go ahead  
under the provisions of the  
Housing Rents and Subsidies  
Act, 1975, which make possible  
the continued payment of a  
housing subsidy.

The Government commends  
the contribution so far made  
by housing associations to the  
development of housing co-  
operatives, and agrees, with the  
working party that they have  
a particularly important part to

play. In particular they should  
take the initiative in finding  
out whether tenants would be  
willing to take part.

The working party, emphasiz-  
ing the need for sponsorship  
and adequate advice in the de-  
velopment of cooperatives,  
recommends that at national  
level responsibility for provid-  
ing guidance should be under-  
taken by the Housing Corpora-  
tion. The Government concurs,  
and the Housing Corporation  
has agreed to set up a specialist  
unit to sponsor and advise co-  
operatives, especially registered  
housing associations.

Mr Croxall, Secretary of  
State for the Environment, has  
invited Mr Lewis Waddell, a  
member of the Housing Cor-  
poration board, to be chairman  
of an advisory committee to  
provide guidance to the cor-  
poration in its new role.

The working party recom-  
mends that every opportunity  
should be taken by ministers  
to encourage local authorities  
to embark on various forms of  
tenant participation and co-  
operative housing and to find  
out whether tenants wish to  
take part in co-operatives, but  
that no attempt should be made  
to impose a standard solution.

The working party says that  
while co-operatives do not in-  
volve the use of housing for  
individual investment, the  
tenant does have a personal  
involvement which makes com-  
mitment and effort more likely  
to seem worth while.

## Theatres plead for aid to survive

By Our Arts Reporter

A "demand for survival" on  
behalf of the British theatre,  
which is being crippled by the  
effects of inflation, was made at  
a meeting in London yesterday  
of the Theatres' Advisory Coun-  
cil. Its chairman, Mrs Renee  
Short, Labour MP for Wolver-  
hampton, North-east, described  
the outlook as very grim in-  
deed.

She hoped questions raised in  
a document issued by the coun-  
cil would be debated in towns  
and villages throughout Britain.  
Those most urgent involved  
the level of government subsidy  
to the theatre, which was lower  
than many other countries;  
zero-rating from VAT; the pro-  
portion of expenditure on ad-  
ministration compared with  
that on actors and technicians;  
the theatre of the immediate  
and long-term future; help for  
playwrights; and whether tele-  
vision could contribute.

Figures from the committee  
showed that of 36 important  
subsidised theatres outside  
London 16 expected a deficit  
this year, ranging from £300  
to £35,000 and averaging £2,962.  
Twenty estimated that by April  
they would have deficits vary-  
ing from £33,000 to £100 and  
averaging more than £7,000.

Mrs Short asked local auth-  
orities to examine their level  
of grants and help their  
theatres to survive by giving  
them more money. Without  
more government aid and local  
help, she said, there would be  
a drastic contraction of all artis-  
tic endeavour in Britain.

## ling defaulters 'futile,' biologist maintains

el Barlins  
correspondent  
imprisonment of men  
payment of mainten-  
their wives or children  
he ended Professor  
McGregor, Head of the  
Department of Sociology at  
College, London Uni-  
said in London last  
week.

Using a meeting of the  
League for Penal Re-  
form is running a cam-  
paign on the subject, Professor  
said that most main-  
tenance defaulters were inad-  
equate, and intellec-  
tually challenged.

There was no evidence that  
them to prison helped  
the money they owed out.  
Imprisoning them was  
a burden on the state,  
not only in keeping  
a prison but, in many  
cases, supporting the second  
family they had acquired.

He pointed out that two gov-  
ernment committees had recom-  
mended the abolition of  
payment for maintenance  
defaulters; the Payne com-  
mission in the enforcement of  
parental debts, in 1969, and  
the committee on one-  
parent families, in 1974.

Government, however,

had set its face against imple-  
menting those recommen-  
dations, Professor McGregor, who  
was a member of both com-  
mittees, said. Last year 2,913  
men were imprisoned for non-  
payment of maintenance, all but  
a few by magistrates' courts.  
It was an inhuman and ineffec-  
tive practice which imported  
into family law something that  
belonged to the criminal law.

Many maintenance defaulters  
were multiple debtors, he  
pointed out. What they needed  
was help in sorting out their  
affairs. Magistrates' courts  
should have attached to them  
enforcement officers who could  
positively assist such people to  
pay their debts. Imprisonment  
was not the answer.

Professor McGregor also  
criticized the complexity of the  
law that magistrates had to  
administer. Under it, defaulters  
ought to be imprisoned only if  
they had the money but delib-  
erately refused to pay. But  
magistrates' courts were not  
equipped to find out whether,  
in fact, the debtor was able to  
pay. In practice, he suspected  
that many maintenance defaulters  
were imprisoned merely be-  
cause they had failed to pay,  
not because they had delib-  
erately refused to do so.

## ish Airways s holiday charges to £5

in Carter  
Further guarantee against  
surcharges is to be  
introduced today by British  
Airways. The airline, which sells  
its Enterprise holiday hol-  
ids to fix a £5 surcharge  
on holidays taken before  
its earlier scheme  
a total guarantee against  
cancellations ends today.  
According to an airline  
man, bookings for sum-  
mer holidays in Greece and  
all over Europe for the  
"As far as we are con-  
cerned, the reawakening  
he said. "We have sold  
holidays there than to  
and more to Greece than  
the whole of Spain last  
year."

The trend was confirmed by  
Mr Cook, Spain accounts  
for 70 per cent of the company's  
bookings but 12 months  
ago it was 70 per cent.  
It is doing five times as  
much as this time last year and  
is 50 per cent up, the  
company said.

Although Spain is still popu-  
lar, winter holidaymakers  
are tending to get away  
from mainland centres. One  
reason is that they are  
so because trouble might  
break out.

Mr Cook said that some people  
to Greece next summer  
will receive refunds rather than  
rebates because the pound  
strengthened against the  
dollar. Anyone going on holi-  
day more than two weeks  
will receive refunds, in some  
cases as much as £2. A Thomson  
holiday package on all  
winter's holidays should  
be below £450.

## Prescribed drugs 'may lead to shoplifting'

By Our Medical Correspondent  
Some cases of shoplifting in  
supermarkets may result from  
lapses in concentration due to  
drugs prescribed for anxiety or  
depression, a psychiatrist  
writes in the *British Medical  
Journal* today. Dr J. Todd, a  
consultant psychiatrist in Brad-  
ford, says he recently examined  
five patients who had put ar-  
ticles in their shopping baskets  
without paying for them.

They had made no attempt at  
concealment and the articles in-  
cluded items they hardly ever  
used. All had unblemished  
records of honesty, and all were  
being treated for psychiatric  
disorders.

The likely explanation, Dr  
Todd says, is that the states of  
mind induced by their illnesses  
combined with the blunting of  
concentration induced by the  
drugs to predispose those  
patients to make mistakes  
while shopping. He suggests  
that people prescribed sedative  
or antidepressant drugs should  
be warned of that.

## Drought threat to holiday region

The main reservoir complex  
serving the holiday area of  
Torbay, Teignmouth and  
Newton Abbot is less than a  
third full, bringing the threat  
of a water shortage when the  
tourist season gets under way  
in late spring.

Mr Roy Slocombe, managing  
director of the South West  
Water Authority, said yester-  
day: "We could be in a very  
difficult situation if the dry  
weather continues. People must  
cooperate... by exercising the  
greatest economy in the use of  
water."

## Economy and games

Four pages of reviews of  
economics books are published  
today in *The Times Higher  
Education Supplement*, with  
articles on the early Olympic  
Games, overseas students, and  
Laurie Sapper on academic  
salaries.

## rail plea over cuts

City Council is to  
petition Rail to reconsider  
plans to cut Sunday ser-  
vice to close many stations  
midway this year.

Proposed closures would  
mean that throughout the  
year, the council says, it  
is that hardship might

# IT PAYS TO BE THICK.

The cost of laying insulation  
3" thick in the loft of a three-  
bedroom house is about £35.

The cost of not insulating  
could be that much *every year*, in  
the form of heat going through the  
roof. Even more, if the price of fuel  
goes up again.



Clearly, it pays to be thick on top.  
At least three inches thick.

Now's a good time to do it, because the heating  
bill for this quarter is by far the biggest of the year.

You can buy loft insulation at builders' merchants and

most big hardware stores. Prices  
vary, so shop around.

You can find out how to  
insulate your home by clipping  
this coupon.

**Department of Energy.**

To: Energy Saving in the Home, P.O. Box 702,  
London SW20 8SZ.  
Please send me your booklets about insulation  
and other ways of saving energy in the home.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



## WEST EUROPE

# Pre-marital sex, homosexuality and masturbation condemned in Vatican attack on permissiveness

From Peter Nichols  
Rome, Jan 15

The Vatican addresses itself today to sexual ethics "in view", as the document on the subject published here expressed it, "of the urgent need to oppose serious errors and widespread aberrant modes of behaviour".

The document firmly opposes any relaxation of the church's traditional rejection of pre-marital sex, homosexuality, and masturbation. Any idea that permissiveness in modern behaviour calls for more flexibility is disavowed: in the domain of sexual ethics "there exist principles and norms which the church has unhesitatingly transmitted as part of her teaching, however much the opinions and morals of the world may have been opposed to them."

At the same time the document asks for help of a variety of persons from bishops and parents to artists and journalists in instructing the faithful and protecting the young.

The document is called a Declaration on certain questions concerning sexual ethics issued by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the former Holy Office) with the approval and confirmation of the Pope who ordered its publication.

As its title suggests, it deals with a limited number of points: it does not go into detail regarding sexual life

within marriage which has already been dealt with in papal encyclicals, including the present Pope's *Humanae vitae* against artificial birth control.

The declaration makes clear its recognition of the great importance of sexual considerations in the life of every individual, and in its opening words, refers to scientific indications in this respect.

But, descending more to particulars, the declaration points out that "in the present period, the corruption of morals has increased, and one of the most serious indications of this corruption is the unbridled exaltation of sex. Moreover, through the means of social communication and through public entertainment this corruption has reached the point of invading the field of education and of infecting the general mentality."

There were those who had put forward concepts and modes of behaviour contrary to the true moral exigencies of the human person. "Some members of the latter group have gone so far as to favour a licentious hedonism."

Many people today, confronted with so many widespread opinions opposed to the teaching which they received from the church, were wondering what they must still hold as true.

"The church cannot remain indifferent to this confusion of minds and relaxation of morals. It is a question, in fact, of a matter which is of the utmost importance both for the personal lives of Christians and

for the social life of our time."

Pre-marital sex remains inadmissible because Christian doctrine states that "every genital act must be within the framework of marriage". This is what the church has always understood and taught "and she finds a profound agreement with her doctrine in men's reflection and in the lessons of history."

On homosexual relations, the conclusion is equally uncompromising: "In sacred scripture they are condemned as a serious depravity and even presented as the sad consequence of rejecting God. This judgment of scripture does not, of course, permit us to conclude that all those who suffer from this anomaly are personally responsible for it, but it does attest to the fact that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered and can in no case be approved of."

Masturbation is not acceptable because "the deliberate use of the sexual faculty outside normal conjugal relations essentially contradicts the finality of the faculty."

The declaration was drafted by an international group of moral theologians. The first comments tonight were severe. The Association for Democratic Education, one of the pioneer movements for birth control here, described it as a return to the "most discredited formulas of Catholic sexual phobia".

A newspaper for homosexuals, *Fuori*, promised demonstrations outside churches.

## Report attacks lack of help for France's 'real poor' 16m live in sub-standard housing

From Charles Hargrove  
Paris, Jan 15

Sixteen million people live in sub-standard housing in France, that is to say without the minimum modern conveniences of a bathroom or shower and indoor lavatory. Half of these sub-standard homes are inhabited by people over 60 and, paradoxically, it is the poorest who benefit least from public assistance in housing.

These are some of the sobering conclusions of a 150-page report on the improvement of old housing, produced by M. Simon Nora, who was a special adviser for social affairs to M. Chaban-Delmas, the former Prime Minister, and M. Bertrand Evens, at the special request of President Giscard d'Estaing. The report has not been made public yet, but will influence the Government's reform of the financing of housing policy, one of the four important reforms planned for the next six months.

"The old housing is that of the poorest and oldest social categories and those who live in the greatest discomfort. It is necessary to prevent the perpetuation of this discomfort, and also to ensure that investments made in the improvement of housing do not systematically chase away their present occupants from homes which have, as a result, become too dear", the report says.

This is a very acute problem in cities like Paris, where the improvement and modernisation of old districts have led to the wholesale departure of the population of small shopkeepers, artisans, pensioners and people of modest means. They cannot afford the much increased rents and are often evicted from their homes by unscrupulous building speculators, through ignorance of their rights and lack of protection from the law.

The report is the first attempt to sketch out a policy for the improvement of old housing. The lack of such a policy in the past has led to what is called "gentrification". The conversion of ancient districts into slums; and its corollary, social segregation, when these slums, through the fantastic appreciation

in the price of land in the city centres, are converted into luxury homes, and the former inhabitants expelled to the outer suburbs.

The report says homes built before 1949 account for 60 per cent of the total of 17 million. It says it is necessary to preserve this national heritage of housing, save the city centres and help the "real poor" by public assistance. It adds that council housing is not accessible to the poorest people.

The report recommends the Government to coordinate its efforts to rehabilitate old housing, in place of the present rigidly compartmentalised system. It also calls for the creation of a "managing committee of an urban reorganisation fund", grouping all the government departments concerned, a tenfold increase in expenditure on restoring old housing and public assistance to really poor tenants which would amount to the difference between what they can afford to pay, and the economic price of a decent home.

The Cabinet was also believed to be discussing a reform of the Cortes (Parliament). The term for a third of the Cortes members ends on March 16. The Government will have to decide whether to prolong it for six months, or call elections.

Señor Manuel Fraga Iribarne, the Minister of the Interior, made a speech last night in the Cortes in which he said that a reform of the constitution was being planned particularly concerning the rights of association and meeting.

Señor Fraga was speaking at a dinner given by the Basque nationalist newspaper *ABC*, which elected the forces of law and order as its men of the year.

## New lease of life for Paris weekly

From Charles Hargrove  
Paris, Jan 15

*Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, the venerable French literary weekly, appeared yesterday in a rejuvenated form and under a new ownership. M. Philippe Tesson, the editor-in-chief of *Le Quotidien de Paris*, the independent left-wing daily, acquired control of the weekly last September.

Since the disappearance of *Le*

*Figaro Littéraire*, now published merely as a supplement in the main paper, it is the only one devoted exclusively to cultural news. Its ambition is to become something of a French equivalent of *The Times Literary Supplement*. In an editorial in the first number M. Tesson writes that the weekly is being given a new lease of life because there is no literary press in the country.

The new formula of the weekly, he says, is meant to satisfy four kinds of requirements: to provide cultural information, report critically on cultural events, widen the scope of literary and artistic journalism by calling each week on personalities who are not professional critics, and study the main cultural problems in depth.

## Telephone men join Madrid strikers

From Our Correspondent  
Madrid, Jan 15

The Spanish Cabinet met today in emergency session as strikes spread to include telephone workers who staged stoppages throughout the country, severely affecting the telephone service.

While the Cabinet was meeting, housewives gathered in the centre of Madrid to march on the Prime Minister's office to protest at rising prices and demand political reforms.

The Cabinet was believed to be discussing what further action to take to stop the strikes, many of them in their second week. Striking postal workers were drafted into the Army yesterday and the possibility of mobilising the telephone workers as well is not ruled out.

Talks between the underground railway workers, who went on strike for five days last week, and the Metro company are so far producing no agreement. The Metro workers have threatened to go on strike again next week if their demands are not met. If so, the Government is expected to mobilise them also.

The Cabinet was also believed to be discussing a reform of the Cortes (Parliament). The term for a third of the Cortes members ends on March 16. The Government will have to decide whether to prolong it for six months, or call elections.

Señor Manuel Fraga Iribarne, the Minister of the Interior, made a speech last night in the Cortes in which he said that a reform of the constitution was being planned particularly concerning the rights of association and meeting.

Señor Fraga was speaking at a dinner given by the Basque nationalist newspaper *ABC*, which elected the forces of law and order as its men of the year.

he reiterated his warning that the Government would tolerate any "violent" social peace.

He hinted that reform was forthcoming to avoid claims for legitimate or in any acceptable "being made". It was necessary to allow more freedom of "strengthen authority".

Riot police guarded offices of the National Telephone Company in Madrid. Those who were not in the offices of the company where workers held a meeting for most of the morning.

If the Cortes is freely elected as many of the striking workers have demanded in demonstrations over the past week, significant losses of jobs as the most powerful block of influence. According to sources a power struggle going on between officials of the Ministry of Trade, Organisation and the Ministry of the Interior.

Of the 561 members of Cortes 150 are chosen by syndicates. If these are reformed as well as the Cortes a great number of officials in the ministry will lose jobs.

According to the sources, officials are supporting strikers' demands in an attempt to create a public order problem for Señor Fraga and so on or at least delay the promised electoral reforms.

The police are still hunting for the kidnappers of Señor José Luis Arrese, the Basque industrialist who was taken from his home at Barakaldo, on Tuesday night. ETA, the Basque separatist organisation, is alleged to be responsible and may be demanding a ransom of £800,000.

## EEC unhappy with French plan for wine growers

From Richard Wigg  
Paris, Jan 15

A series of new measures has been offered the wine growers in the south of France by M. Chirac, the Prime Minister, to combat the imports of cheaper Italian wines. The wine growers' leaders met M. Chirac in Paris yesterday.

But the wine growers' mood remained clearly suspicious today. A mass rally in the Languedoc-Roussillon region was called for February 6. Above all, the wine growers have not been accorded the outright ban on Italian wine imports they had demanded. M. Chirac told them that this would defy EEC regulations.

One of the measures to be implemented, it seems immediately, will be to tighten the sampling at the frontier in search of chemical substances that the French allege are being added to Italian white wines to turn them into rosé. It is estimated that this measure alone will cut imports by a third.

Last month, total wine imports from Italy were still at 65m litres in spite of the import levy imposed by France in September, which is the subject of litigation with Brussels.

For the first time, M. Chirac offered the southern wine growers an incentives scheme that would cut the overproduction of low quality red wines which is at the root of the problem. This provides for income guarantees for the small growers producing better quality wines. The scheme will, however, affect the big growers who have expanded production in recent years, and some of whom are prominent wine growers' leaders.

David Cross writes from Brussels.

One of the French Government's plans to mollify its protesting wine growers is likely to be resisted strenuously by the rest of the European Community.

This is the view of EEC officials in Brussels who have

been studying details of a series of measures announced by M. Chirac, the French Prime Minister, yesterday to halt persistent imports of Italian wine and improve French production returns.

One of the French ideas is to seek EEC agreement for the reintroduction of border taxes on exports of Italian wine to France. The French argue that the absence of the taxes is encouraged the Italians to continue to send more than a million litres of wine a month to France in spite of the 10 per cent import tax levied by the French Government in defiance of EEC free trade rules.

The European Commission, as the custodian of the Community's agricultural policy, fears that the introduction of new border taxes to offset the *de facto* devaluation of the Italian lira could create a dangerous precedent. It might encourage other member states to tamper with border taxes in similar difficult circumstances. The Commission wants to see the gradual abolition of all border taxes which it regards as a serious obstacle to free trade.

The Commission's farm experts are less concerned about other French proposals for helping their producers. Like the setting up of a national wine office to regulate the market and the introduction of various quality controls. On first sight, these proposals appear to be in line with Community rules, they believe.

The problems of French and Italian wine growers are due to be discussed by ministers of agriculture of the Nine again next week at one of the monthly meetings. A final decision, however, is likely to await the outcome of the annual farm price review in the spring, in which a new Community wine marketing system is expected to figure prominently.

## Christian Democrats gain Lower Saxony in upset

From Dan van der Vat  
Bonn, Jan 15

The first political upset of West Germany's general election year came today in Lower Saxony, where the opposition candidate was unexpectedly elected state prime minister.

This is not just an acute embarrassment for the Bonn coalition of Social Democrats (SPD) and Free Democrats (FDP). It also has serious implications for their capacity to govern effectively, because five seats in the Bundestag, the federal Upper House, will pass to the Opposition as a result.

The drama in the Hanover Parliament began yesterday. The resignation on grounds of age of Dr Alfred Kubel (SPD) freed the premiership had made the election necessary.

In the 1974 election for the state Parliament, the SPD and FDP together got 78 seats and the Christian Democrats (CDU) 77, in a House of 155 deputies. Under the state constitution, prime minister must gain an absolute majority of deputies (78) to be elected.

In yesterday's first round, the coalition candidate, Herr Helmut Kasimier, got only 75 votes because the coalition deputies spoiled their papers. The opposition candidate, Dr Ernst Albrecht, got 77. A second round was therefore arranged for today.

This alone caused embarrassment enough for the coalition, but there was universal expectation that today's ballot would set the record straight "and give Herr Kasimier a majority". In secret, casual ballots last night, all 78 coalition deputies supported him.

But at noon today, Dr Albrecht, aged 45, was declared elected, by 78 votes to 74, with three spoiled papers once again. This means that one coalition deputy must have voted for him, and also that the three who spoiled their papers must have done so deliberately.

There is no obvious reason Herr Kasimier is gifted and universally respected. The defections may reflect dissatisfaction with last year's municipal boundary reforms in Lower Saxony.

Dr Albrecht now faces the task of either forming a minority government or persuading the SPD or the FDP to join him in a realigned coalition. Whatever happens, the CDU, as the party forming the state government, can constitutionally lay claim to all the state's five seats in the Bundestag.

The CDU already has a majority of one vote, which has proved difficult enough for the Bonn Government. Lower Saxony would give it a majority of 11, and therefore, as well as majorities on all Bundestag committees, parity with the coalition on the crucial joint liaison committee of Bundestag and Bundestag—a formidable blocking mechanism in a general election year.



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## OVERSEAS

## Britain gives qualified backing in Security Council to Palestinians

From Peter Strafford  
New York, Jan 15

The United Nations Security Council resumed its debate on the Middle East today with speeches from the Soviet Union and Britain. The Soviet Union gave broad support to the various demands made by the Palestinians.

Mr Ivor Richard, Britain's permanent representative, told the council that the right of the Palestinians to self-determination should be recognized. But he had to be recognized that those Palestinians who did not now recognize the existence of Israel must come to do so, and begin the task of considering how they could live at peace with Israel.

"In any final settlement in the Middle East," Mr Richard said, "a way must be found to take account of the rights of the Palestinian people and to enable them to express their national identity. How the rights of the Palestinian people are to be further defined is, we believe, a matter for negotiation between the parties."

One of the issues now being discussed is just how far the council might go in recognizing the rights of the Palestinian people. This is a matter of precise terminology, and the Americans have so far taken a restrictive line, threatening to veto any resolution which goes beyond talk of Palestinian "interests."

Meanwhile, negotiations con-

tinued among the Arab delegations in an attempt to decide what their strategy should be, and whether or not to put forward a resolution that was bound to be vetoed. There was some speculation that if they did not overcome their differences, they might decide to adjourn the meeting.

In his statement today, Mr Richard took a broadly optimistic view of the progress made recently in the Middle East. He spoke of the various agreements between Israel, Egypt and Syria.

Mr Yakov Malik, the Soviet representative, gave backing to many of the ideas put forward so far by the different Arab representatives. He called for a withdrawal from all the territories occupied in 1967, and he supported the right of the Palestinians to return to their homeland.

He also pressed the Soviet demand for a reconvening of the Geneva conference, with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, which is rejected by the Israelis. Mr Malik said that the Soviet Union was convinced that peace was impossible without the full participation of the Palestinians.

He attacked the notion of "piecemeal arrangements," a reference to the American approach, and said that an overall approach was needed. He gave a warning that the situation in the Middle East threatened world peace, but added that peace in the area should be possible.

## Seychelles hope to be independent by July

By Our Diplomatic Staff

The Seychelles hope to become a fully independent republic within the Commonwealth by the end of June, Mr James Mancham, the islands' Chief Minister, told a press conference in London yesterday. He hoped that the 92 islands, including Aldabra, Farquhar and Desroches, which he wants returned by Britain, would evolve into a "little Switzerland" of the Indian Ocean.

But first some final problems will have to be settled at the constitutional conference which opens at Marlborough House next week. Mr Mancham thought that an acceptable formula for the return of the islands could be found, and hoped that riparian talks with Britain and the United States could begin before independence.

The three islands were detached from the Seychelles by Britain in 1965. With Diego Garcia, they were the subject of a much-attacked 50-year agreement which gave the United States certain defence facilities, established so far only on Diego Garcia.

Aldabra, with its unique fauna and flora, was leased to the Royal Society, and Mr Mancham emphasized that any plans for Aldabra would be evolved "in full consultation with the Royal Society."

The constitution agreed in 1970 gave the Seychelles, which have a population of 60,000, a large measure of internal self-government, but the Governor retained a substantial role. Last year's constitutional conference led to a coalition government between Mr Mancham's Seychelles Democratic Party and the People's United Party



Mr James Mancham: "Little Switzerland" hope.

headed by Mr Albert René, who was also at the press conference.

They have now reached agreement on an important bone of contention, a revised electoral system, and plan to carry their condition through into independence.

Mr Mancham said that he expects to become an executive President elected by the people, with Mr René as Prime Minister. He thought the next election would be in 1979.

Money is likely to be a problem at next week's talks. Although a British government loan of £10m has been agreed for the next two years, it is tied to approved projects. A "silver handshake" of perhaps £3m would enable them to go into independence with something in reserve, Mr Mancham said.

## US told ban on Concorde would break treaties

Washington, Jan 15.—Britain and France have told Mr William Coleman, the American Transportation Secretary that it would be a violation of international treaties to prohibit Concorde from landing at American airports.

They said in a letter that the treaties required a signatory nation to permit service by an aircraft certified as airworthy, as was Concorde.

The letter, sent on Tuesday, said the Anglo-French supersonic airliner cannot be denied the landing rights it seeks at Kennedy Airport, New York, and Dulles Airport, Washington because of air and noise pollution, since the United States Environmental Act "does not apply specifically to aircraft."

Mr Coleman held final public hearings on the issue on January 5 and said he would rule on landing rights within 30 days.

British Airways and Air France want to begin regular flights to New York and Washington later this year, but have been opposed vehemently by environmentalists and numerous congressmen. State Department officials have expressed concern about repercussions from London and Paris.

Whatever Mr Coleman rules is bound to be challenged in court, with the British and French arguing that a denial violates international treaties and environmentalists claiming that the aircraft violates air and noise pollution standards. —Reuter.

## S Africa turns away Angolan refugees

From Our Correspondent  
Johannesburg, Jan 15

Some 2,500 Angolan refugees have arrived by sea off the South-West African port of Walvis, but Dr Connie Mulder, the South African Interior Minister, said tonight that only about half of them would be allowed to land.

Half of the refugees on board the Greek cargo ship Silver Sky and a fleet of some 20 fishing boats at Walvis Bay are black.

Dr Mulder said in a statement in Cape Town that those not permitted to land would have to go back to Angola. The Portuguese Government had accepted full responsibility for its citizens among the refugees. Those who were prepared to go to Portugal would be allowed to land and would be flown from Windhoek to Portugal.

According to provisional estimates, about 50 per cent of those on board the various vessels are Portuguese citizens.

Dr Mulder said the Portuguese Ambassador in South Africa and his staff would help in establishing who were Portuguese citizens. The remaining refugees would receive all possible help for humanitarian reasons but they would have to return to Angola.

Earlier, Dr Mulder said South Africa had refused to allow the refugees to disembark because they were not from a combat zone in Angola and they had not asked to land.

The Silver Sky, 6,900 tons and 25 years old, arrived on Monday

night off Walvis Bay from the southern Angolan port of Mocimboa, which is held by the FNL. There were 1,600 refugees crammed into the holds and on the decks.

The ship was ordered to anchor outside territorial limits until yesterday, when she was allowed to move into the harbour. A number of sick, including children, were taken ashore.

Last night some 20 fishing boats, carrying a further 900 Angolans, arrived off Walvis Bay. They are still outside the harbour, according to latest reports.

Dr Mulder's statement that the refugees have not asked to disembark does not fit in with reports that conditions on board the crammed Silver Sky and the other vessels are unhealthy. It seems odd that 1,600 people who have endured an uncomfortable voyage in an ancient cargo ship should not want to land.

Last year South Africa allowed thousands of white Angolan refugees to cross the South-West African border unhindered. Most of these have been flown out to Portugal at South African expense. Portugal has paid some of the bill but most of it is outstanding.

The master of the Silver Sky, Captain Kononaki Panagiotis, said today: "I am not prepared to take the responsibility which will occur if I sail." He said he would leave the Walvis Bay anchorage only under force.

The Silver Sky is designed to accommodate a crew of about 40 and has five toilets. Among the 1,600 refugees on board are said to be about 400 children and 600 women.

## CIA's news links to be disclosed

From Our Own Correspondent  
Washington, Jan 15

When the Senate committee on intelligence publishes its report, it will give a list of news organizations which employ members of the Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA, apparently, has about 40 agents on its payroll around the world who pose as journalists, five of whom work for important news gathering organizations.

The committee will not publish the names of the agents themselves, only their organizations, because they might have published misleading information. The suggestion is that the CIA infiltrated these organizations in order to influence their reporting, rather than that it used them as cover for intelligence gathering.

The committee will also publish a Bill on intelligence matters next week. It recommends that there should be a permanent "oversight committee" of Congress to supervise the activities of the CIA. It would have to approve any important covert operation before it took place.

The Administration thinks ill of the bill, partly because it considers the actions of the CIA none of Congress's business and partly because it does not trust congressional committees to keep secrets. There are now six committees involved in intelligence in various ways, and the past year has shown that nothing divulged to them under a cloak of secrecy can be kept out of the press.

Senator Church, who heads the Senate committee, believes that a permanent committee of the Senate, or perhaps a joint committee with the House of Representatives, would be more responsible. He also recommends that membership of the committee should rotate, giving every senator a turn and avoiding the dangers of establishing too close an entente between the committee and the Administration.

The Administration has been wont to inform favoured congressmen of its secret activities, and their colleagues have sometimes been outraged when they heard of what had been going on behind their backs.

## Mr Clerides under pressure not to resign

From Our Correspondent  
Nicosia, Jan 15

The Greek Cypriot House of Representatives tonight passed a resolution calling on Mr Glafcos Clerides to withdraw his resignation from his post as negotiator in the Cyprus peace talks. The resolution was passed in closed session. Mr Clerides, who has been president of the House since Cyprus independence in 1960, was not present.

Earlier, parliamentary representatives of the United Party — of which Mr Clerides is the leader — met him at his office in the House. Mr John Christophides, the Foreign Minister, Mr Christakis Venizelos, the Interior Minister, and Mr Remy Gorge, the senior United Nations political adviser, as well as trade union representatives, paid visits to Mr Clerides during the afternoon.

A Greek Cypriot newspaper reported today that Mr Clerides had issued his resignation after Archbishop Makarios backed a suggestion that the negotiator should be accompanied by advisers at future peace talks.

## Closure of Sri Lanka university ordered

Colombo, Jan 15.—The senate of Peradeniya university near

Kandy, about 75 miles from Colombo, has ordered the campus to be closed from today because of student unrest.

## to price leads mortgage

id Cross

Jan 15  
Belgian Government's freeze potato prices led to an almost immediate rise in the shops and a thriving black

market designed to hold a cost of living and a lucrative export to the Government froze wholesale prices at 10 francs a kilo (p a lb) and eight francs about 5p a lb) respectively this week.

Belgium was partly intended to a further rise in it a time when the Govt is trying to hold down its. The potato is a key in the Belgian consumer index which leads to increases under Europe's sophisticated scheme of price indexation.

It also designed to protect producers from sending a proportion of the Belgian Holland, where there is all, largely due to mass exports to Britain. Sellers and retailers acted quickly to the Govt's refusal to put potatoes at the prices by the Government in shops, who have paid prices higher than are breaking the freeze. Their stocks under the at prices of up to 20 kilo (about 12p a lb), country where chips are with just about everything, including mussels, a local shortage is already a near panic among consumers. In addition, the us, streamer ship have marked up their a portion by as much as 10 per cent.

ally, the Belgian potato is 10 per cent higher than last autumn. But a whole was about 20 it lower than a year

## munists to est over rto bombings

ur Own Correspondent

Jan 15

Communist neighbourhood in and around the Portuguese city of are planning a mass demonstration on Saturday to at the state of exploitation have occurred in the A bomb which caused damage to a café in Cundo, 15 miles from at dawn today was the th to explode this month. The other cases, there have had communist Responsibility for an early yesterday in the hall of offices of a building, has been claimed by a group calling "anti-communist com-

campaign preparations for the elections in April, the Community has complained that the will make free elections. Other testimonies also have the violence.

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# THE ARTS

## A double act to hold the boards

**The Sunshine Boys (a)**  
ABC 2, Shaftesbury  
Avenue  
ABC 3 Fulham Road  
Rancho Deluxe (x)  
Continental  
Tottenham Court Road  
The 8-Wheel Beast (x)  
Warner West End 3

**Great Expectations (a)**  
Odeon, Marble Arch  
**The Bawdy Adventures of Tom Jones (x)**  
Empire

Walter Matthau has been working on his old man act for several years as the eponymous septuagenarian in Jack Lemmon's 1971 movie *Kotch*, then the following year in the first reel of Don Siegel's *Charley Varrick* where he disguised himself as a senior citizen to rob a bank, and now as a 73-year-old former vaudeville star in *The Sunshine Boys*. The richly detailed performance is all of a piece—the arched shoulders, the spray-footed walk, the mind tuned in to its own special frequency, the private world carried around like a shell from which his tortoise head darts out suddenly to abuse those around him.

His partner in the film does not need to impersonate an ageing vaudeville comic. Nearly 25 years Matthau's senior, the 80-year-old George Burns was on the stage as a child performer before the Great War, and became a radio headliner as a stand-up comic, second only to Jack Benny at the time, capable of holding the attention just by lightening a cigarette, waving an audience with that flicking-of-the-finger, and always radiating an extraordinary geniality. Together they make this film version of Neil Simon's slight stage play into a joyous occasion. The playwright has adapted it himself and the director is Herbert Ross, who once again has shown himself adept at unobtrusively opening out a Broadway comedy on the screen without destroying its theatrical vitality—a service he has previously rendered to *The Owl and the Pussycat* and *Play It Again Sam*.

The *Sunshine Boys* are another Simon odd couple, the legendary comedy team of Al Lewis and Willy Clark who have spent 43 years together at the top of the bill and loathed each other. Now they have been apart for 11 years, living in retirement, and the film turns upon the efforts of Willy's agent-nephew (the charming Richard Benjamin) to reunite them for a performance of their classic "Doctor's Office" sketch in a network television spectacular tracing the history of comedy from ancient Greece to the present. The plot is simple, a mere anecdote with a couple of obvious twists; Simon relies upon the central characters' behaviour to hold us and upon their reactions to each other to produce the jokes.

Matthau's Willy Clark is a misanthropic slob, who can't stand the way his partner stabs him with an empathic finger and spine upon him on stage; Burns's Al Lewis is a fastidious, kindly man, with some underlying streak of devilry to match his partner's concealed feelings of gentle concern. They need each other professionally and personally but, deeply resent this mutual reliance, as if symbiosis were a deadly disease rather than a means of life. Two other things hold them together—memories of the



George Burns and Walter Matthau

vanished communal world of vaudeville they once lived in, celebrated in a montage of black-and-white film of long-forgotten music-hall acts against which the credit titles are projected; and of that other world of old age. The latter, too, can be seen as a form of theatre or vaudeville, where people perform for those around them, and try to hang on to the half-remembered roles which are their own identities. *The Sunshine Boys* is touching, very funny, and while it only scratches at the surface of the situations it creates, it generally manages to avoid sentimentality.

*Rancho Deluxe* is an amiable mess in which the weather changes as arbitrarily as the mood, and director Frank Perry seems incapable of exercising much control over either. The action is set one autumn and winter in modern Montana where a couple of cattle thieves

operating with a pickup truck, a buffalo gun and a chain-saw live off the land, and most especially off the stock of monopolistic rancher John Brown (Clifton James). The rustlers, one a rich drop-out from the East (Jeff Bridges), the other a cool, sardonic Indian (Sam Waterston), see themselves as the last frontiersmen, the Lone Ranger and Tommo turned ironic social bandits. Except for a crazy stock detective (beautifully played by Slim Pickens) everyone is a stranger in the West, including the capitalist rancher Brown and his wife, who moved out to Montana after selling their chain of beauty parlours in New York.

The novelist Tom McGuane is responsible for the inventive, amusing and extremely indulgent script, and clearly knows the modern West. There are numerous sharp and quirky

scenes that stick in the mind—a kidnapped prize bull left in a bedroom of a Holiday Inn; a wild speech by the young Indian's anxious father in which he attributes all the ills of Montana to a universal lust for pickup trucks; an edgy conversation about rustling shot in one long take (and filmed in reflection) as two cowboys play a game of electronic tennis in the old saloon. Yet for all its incidental felicities and a genuine freshness of vision, *Rancho Deluxe* never manages to cohere. However, given the right double bill the picture is worth catching, and might well finish up in a couple of years' time with something of a cult reputation.

Once having registered that Sergio Corbucci's *The 8-Wheel Beast* is a dreaded juggernaut, and that what we're in for is a story of Italian long distance

lorry drivers and not a horror movie, one settles back to travel hopefully and learn something about life on the road between Milan and Warsaw. What we get is a flashy consignment of traditional tough-guy clichés delivered by a disenchanted middle-aged northerner and his loudmouthed young Sicilian co-driver. They drink, and fight, and fornicate their way across Europe, and then buy their own vehicle as a way of settling down. As independent operators they come into conflict with their former comrades (whom they betray in a strike), dishonest merchants, and the Mafia, and finally end up saving their truck in a cliff-hanging scene that might have earned the title "The Dole Queue of Fear". The gap between Corbucci's meretricious movie and *Bicycle Thieves* is more than six wheels and 25 years.

## Philip French

This week's two British movies have nothing to commend them—not even the way they look despite having been photographed by two of this country's, and indeed the world's, outstanding cameramen. Freddie Young and Douglas Slocombe. Young photographed *Great Expectations*, a totally unnecessary movie unless the producers thought they could make something superior to David Lean's distinguished picture of 1946, a difficult but by no means impossible task. Cruelly adapted by Sherman Yellen and limply directed by his fellow American Joseph Hardy, this version looks like a cut-price musical called *Pip* with the songs left out. Michael York is all embarrassed and embarrassing charm as Pip, and no one else emerges with any credit.

Douglas Slocombe's unhappy assignment was *The Bawdy Adventures of Tom Jones*, directed by Cliff Owen who back in 1953, on the strength of *A Prize of Arms* and *The Wrong Arm of the Law*, was briefly thought of as one of our more promising local talents. This soft-core costume musical is performed by a splendid, and totally wasted cast (Arthur Lowe, Geraldine McEwan, Michael Bates and others), and is largely devoted to creating situations in which Fielding's hero can be speeded from bed to bed. The decor is atrocious, the Carry-On style music is atrocious, the sex jokes are atrocious, the sex jokes are atrocious. The music and lyrics are incredible. Tom Jones (Nicky Henson) is required to sing songs with words like "I may have been born on the wrong side of the road, but they'll never make a wet blanket out of me". And the hapless Trevor Howard as Squire Western reveals his lecherous fellow revellers with a number of how to handle women called "Walkaway", that contains the couplet, "If her belly starts swelling, find another dwelling". A truly wretched picture.

## Vile body talk

Just a Nimmo BBC 2

Stanley Reynolds

Derek Nimmo had a stroke of luck on Wednesday. He followed hard on the rapping notes of Miss Nana Mouskouri's new BBC 2 series, but soon his luck ran out. Probably when the title of his new show, *Just a Nimmo*, came on the screen. The gimmick of this offering is that each evening a different, and usually special subject, on Wednesday it was body talk, which is the new phrase meant to explain why one instinctively shuts one's eyes and shudders when, for example, Derek Nimmo says: "It seems our bodies have a reaction all their own; some speak volumes (pause) like Raquel Welch (leer)." The urge to vote with the feet and go to bed was strong, but duty prevailed.

Nimmo's guests were a Miss Pamela Randen, apparently an expert on body talk, and Jonathan Miller, the expert on all things, and the Chaplinesque Norman Wisdom, who told an improbable story about getting knocked down by a bicycle in the Bayswater Road and getting his ear caught in a spoke. The point of this apropos body talk escaped me.

The best moment came when Jonathan Miller, after going on about the study of body talk, was asked by Nimmo what was meant by an animal's territory. Miller then suddenly fell back in his chair and started rapping his head, a most incongruous and perfect imitation of John Bird's perfect imitation of Dr Jonathan's own idiosyncratic style of body talk. Three gentlemen volunteered from the studio audience that came on stage, removed their jackets and then put them on again. Miss Randen attempted some analysis of their personalities through this.

A tired sort of effort. I should have been expecting Sherlock Holmesian deductions about their stations in life. Perhaps one expects too much from television. What did surprise me was that Nimmo evidently was flown all the way to London to order a new chair how much more comfortable for a ride in his water bus. He was told 100 of whatever currency they use in Siam. An idle-looking fellow who happened to be lounging in a chair in the middle bank told Nimmo he should have smiled. Then Nimmo asked again, smiling, and was told 350. The studio audience, obviously puffed with strong drink, roared with laughter. Perhaps I understand the irony of television licence payers sacrificed at the way their money is spent.

## Cavalli Vespers

Brompton Oratory / Radio 3

Alan Blyth

As a fitting homage to Cavalli on the precise occasion of the 200th anniversary of his death, his *Vespers* were revived on Wednesday at the Brompton Oratory (an appropriate setting, as it is roughly the size of St Mark's, Venice, where they were first heard under Paolo Montegrassi's direction. The work, although lasting no far short of two hours without a break as performed on Wednesday, only just outstayed its welcome and that because of the penance of sitting on very hard seats. Inevitably, comparisons with Monteverdi's *Vespers* are made, but these seem as irrelevant and unhelpful as trying to relate, say, Elgar to Holst: there may be similarities of idiom, but beyond that the approach of the two composers is greatly different. Cavalli devotes himself almost entirely to solo voices, mostly used in bold arisos and closely interlocking duets and trios that are more secular than sacred in connotation. Although the instrumental parts are often subtle and beguiling, they are nearly always subordinate to the voices, which elaborate gloriously and at some length on the texts of the Psalms. Cavalli is so ingenious in varying his settings that the ear seldom tires of his florid ideas and his illustrative response to particular lines is often illuminating like a shaft of light to a stained-glass window. The chromatic anguish at "To eat the bread of sorrow" in Psalm 126, and the positive rejection of the single word "Lamentem" in Psalm 122 are just two particularly striking examples. Just when one might tire of such vocal display the plainsong antiphons intervene like a primitive painting after too many baroque masterpieces.

Mr Norrington had to make decisions in his reconstruction. Most of them seemed the right ones. A gentle, grave sonata served as overture. Versicles and Responses were included at the beginning and end. As far as possible, baroque instruments were used. The chiton was given a prominent continuo role and the brass instruments (happily cornets and sackbuts) joined the ensemble sparingly.

The Schulz Choir of London doubled as chorus and soloists. The alto parts often lie low but they presented little trouble to Mervyn Dickinson and Gloria Jennings. Mervyn Dwyer and Neil Jenkins were given outstandingly expressive roles in the soprano parts. The London Sinfonietta played the *Symphonice Concertante*. The virtues of this piece are familiar. It is understated, originality, quiet elegance, and the formal sophistication remains a source of delight. Indeed, the rate of invention is high, particularly in terms of sound and texture via the solo harp, piano and harpsichord, themselves a more engaging team than Tippet's two violins and cello. Another item with triple soloists was Bach's *Concerto for three violins and orchestra*, heard in a new transcription by Christopher Hogwood from a Harpsichord version. That sounded authentic, and the violins were able to do more than any keyboard instrument for the Adagio's singing lines.

## Cinderella

Covent Garden

John Percival

The heroine in Ashton's ballet *Cinderella* makes her entrance to the ballroom down a flight of steps, and so that we can see how enraptured she is, she must never look down as she descends. It is characteristic of Merle Park's interpretation of the role that she, alone among the present crop of Cinderellas, remembers Fonteyn's trick with that entrance, and how much more telling it is actually to look up rather than straight forward.

Park takes great care over the details of the part, even to the point that her imitation of the stepsisters' dancing lesson, when she is left alone and trying to cheer herself up, varies from night to night according to whatever tricks they get up to. But her dancing never looks laboured; it is fresh and strong and flowing; full of nice detail but not losing sight of the broader shapes.

David Wall's playing of the prince matches her well. He combines enthusiasm and authority in a way that is

unusual and attractive. His solo on Wednesday (their first performance this season) they have another tomorrow) and a first swinging vogue and their duets were beautifully done, especially the last. Together they caught all the nobility of this short, gracious dance of love and new horizons.

Cecilia Parkinson's fairy godmother looked much happier and more benevolent than at earlier performances: Ashley Lawrence's firm hand in the orchestra pit perhaps explains the difference. Ashton's step-sister blossomed also; it is certainly actionable to call her an ugly sister when her appearance is based on that of a most distinguished poet and her arms are among the most beautiful on any stage. But she can be beautiful too; having contrived to lose her powder puff, she sought it in a most unlikely spot.

My companion at this performance had once been an assistant stage manager in a repertory company and remarked that even for suburban pantomime she would not have been happy with such messy, noisy transformations and clumsy lighting. Also, it seems inexcusable to let each interval drag on well over half an hour.

## Pears/Ellis

Queen Elizabeth Hall

Joan Chissell

Familiar though Peter Pears may be as a recitalist in Aldeburgh, he is not often heard in this role nowadays in London. So, his appearance with Osian Ellis on Wednesday in one of the Redcliffe Concerts of British Music was an event, the more so since the programme included the London premiere of Britten's recent *Canticle V* as well as the first performance of Priaux's *Rainier's song-cycle* for tenor and harp. Pears, from the Ark, with words by Carmelo Bernos de Gasquid translated from the French by Rumer Godden.

"Lord, what a menagerie! Between your Downpour and these animal cries one cannot hear oneself think!" cries the voice of the poet. Unhappily, before a cat, donkey, butterfly, owl, lark, cock and dove in turn make their own little pleas. Richer opportunities for characterization could scarcely be imagined. The composer has not wasted a note, notably in the flimsy, flashing butterfly, the sleepy owl and the confidently crowing cock. Yet it was impossible to escape the

suspicion that each inmate of the Ark shared Noah's own claustrophobic boredom, summarized in his "All this water makes my heart sink... the days are long, Lord." The occasional switch into speech or onomatopoeic accompaniment could not disguise a basic monotony of pace and style.

Britten's *Canticle V*, "The Death of St Narcissus", was a different story, and once again, as so often, because of this composer's response to verbal imagery. Not in phrase in T. S. Eliot's striking verse is left unilluminated nor its emotional overtones unreleased, and all of it with the poet's own mixture of elusiveness and graphic imagery. Peter Pears and Osian Ellis lavished no less care on Rainier's work than this, but it was the *Canticle* that allowed their imagination to take wing and won them the evening's warmest applause.

Mr Pears also sang a group of "songs" by Dealand and Purcell with unusual intimacy, well as beautiful continuity of line, and found a telling variety of colour with which to characterize his closing group of folk songs. Mr Ellis, unfailingly vivid in his phrasing, evocation, was a true partner. He also gave a masterly performance of that little masterpiece, the *Harp Suite* in C specially written for him by Britten in 1969.

## Academy of St Martin Festival Hall

Max Harrison

Wednesday's concert by the Academy of St Martin in the Fields was in effect an evening of concertos, ancient, modern, and chiefly for strings. If the formal sophistication remains a source of delight, indeed, the rate of invention is high, particularly in terms of sound and texture via the solo harp, piano and harpsichord, themselves a more engaging team than Tippet's two violins and cello.

Another item with triple soloists was Bach's *Concerto for three violins and orchestra*, heard in a new transcription by Christopher Hogwood from a Harpsichord version. That sounded authentic, and the violins were able to do more than any keyboard instrument for the Adagio's singing lines.



Dandy Nichols, Trevor Ray and Frank Finlay

Photograph by Zoe Dominio

## A masterpiece of farce

### Plunder National

Irving Wardle

After Graham Greene's failure to bring Raffles back to life, it has been left to Ben Travers to restore the gentleman crackman to his theatrical place of honour. *Plunder* (1928) made his first appearance half way through his famous series of Aldwych farces, and it leaves you envying the audiences who came to expect work as funny, honest and beautifully constructed as this as a matter of course.

The piece is a perfect demonstration of the Travers Law: namely, that farce results from placing rational people in outrageous circumstances and showing them trying to fight their way out. Nobody in *Plunder* is a "funny" character: not the grasping Mrs Hewlett, who has ascended from house-keeper to *grande dame* by a death-bed marriage; not the disinherited Joan nor her ardently incompetent fiancé D'Arcy; and certainly not the inevitable Freddy Malone, who shares a timbered mansion with his girl accomplice on the proceeds of his house-party pickings. However, put that together and see what happens. Under the stress of greed, resentment, fear and the chance of a really whacking theft, these people swell into monsters with all their normal characteristics magnified into the farcical absolutes. Malone blossoms into a Satanic mastermind, D'Arcy plunges into such incoherence that his remarks start sounding like a literal translation from German.

Even shorn of its laughs, *Plunder* would remain an ex-

tremely efficient play of suspense. Besides the matter of burglary and disinheritance, there is also a blackmail motive; and all these elements are mobilized in a central house-party act, involving three separate intrigues, all interwoven and timed with an expertise that leaves Agatha Christie standing. Nor does Travers skate over the consequences when the plot malfeasance and intruder on the theft falls to his death from a bedroom window. Ten years is ten years; hanging is hanging: facts that Travers never lets you forget in the last act when Malone and D'Arcy are hauled in to brazen things out at Scotland Yard.

With a little adjustment and a little more violence, *Plunder* would soon cease to be a laughing matter; which, I think, is its real claim to the classic rank. Great farce always is a precarious experience, in which comedy barely escapes being engulfed by horror and disaster. To explain how Travers achieves this would mean going through the piece point by point, dwelling on his care over preparation and his skill in releasing fixed characters into wild cards whose reactions carry more weight than the events to which they are responding. But, to pick one example, here is D'Arcy in the bedroom hovering over the sleeping Mrs Hewlett with a phial of knock-out drops while Malone is rifling her jewel case. Experimentally, he uncorks it and has a sniff, and knocks himself out. The effect is hilarious, but you suppress your laughter for fear of awakening the sleeping dragon; such is the contradictory combination of character and situation that Travers manages to bring off.

At the National, this moment owes much to Dinsdale London's D'Arcy who, besides his faculty for falling like a stricken telegraph pole, projects a sense of amiable fatuity from his first rabbit-toothed entry that develops into the sublime panic of the last act where he succeeds in tying the police up in knots through his own hopeless entanglements. But the whole of the bedroom scene is a model of swift precise direction, reducing a complicated action to something as effortless as a Mozart scale.

In that sense, it stands out from the general context of Michael Blakemore's production which, as in the case of Gilbert's *Engaged* is somewhat heavy and under-paced. A great deal of elaborately timed effects have gone into the show; but where, for instance, you see Malone and his girl exchanging a hurried embrace before a maid's entry, the move is executed deliberately and without sparkle. There is a prevailing sense of slow practice which will presumably accelerate

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undertaken which, in their present situation, is not  
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Points are not eligible for these awards, nor are those in receipt (in 1975/76)  
of 150 or more from a major funding body.  
Units will be selected for award by the Association's Visual Arts Panel whose  
members will speak with as many applicants as possible to ensure that applications  
are fully understood and assessed.  
Further information can be obtained from: Ceryn Paula Walker,  
Visual Arts Officer, Greater London Arts Association, 25/31  
Vivian Place, London WC1H 9SF.  
Closing date for receipt of applications is 16th February, 1976.















# Conference and exhibition centres

a Special Report

## More meetings but smaller groups

by Michael Toynbee

more difficulties there the more it seems people to sit down and discuss. At least that is the reason gained from the 3-million pound conference business which comes to flourish despite the economic recession.

budgets have been squeezed and attendances in some cases are reported to be down, but the overall picture is still one of expansion. The number of events is increasing at both national and international level and it is conservatively estimated that the total number of participants in international conferences and conventions will be more than double between 1973 and 1983. It is confidently forecast that by the end of the century the number will have reached 10,000.

In the meantime, there is a trend towards smaller conferences, more of them, and more specialized. The stereotypical conference is consistently losing ground. According to a recently published analysis of the market by the United States Department of Commerce, there is a pronounced shift towards events in which matters of substance are discussed and in which professionalism—or the appearance of professionalism—becomes a vital element.

'The shift is towards more specialized, more substantial, more thoughtful conferences', the report concludes.

This is true not only of international events but also some of the corporate meetings. It is probably a sector of the market which has been hardest hit by the worsening economic climate.

In the United Kingdom, many companies are now reluctant to run to the expense of getting everyone to one place and are content to hold a series of regional meetings. This has the advantage of keeping travelling costs down and luring the time an employee is off the road or away from his desk.

The immediate future for overseas conventions

which have been steadily increasing in number and going further afield is also in question. There have already been casualties such as an event which had been scheduled for Spain and has now been switched to Jersey. Others are staying at home.

Nevertheless, places like Mainz, France and Spain are all doing well. So, surprisingly, is Switzerland which is not particularly noted as an inexpensive destination. British Airways, for example, is offering some bargains, based on the cheapest available fares. A three-night package to Basel, based on half-board accommodation at the Hilton, including return air fare, transfers, service charge and use of a conference room, is priced from £68 a person (minimum 10).

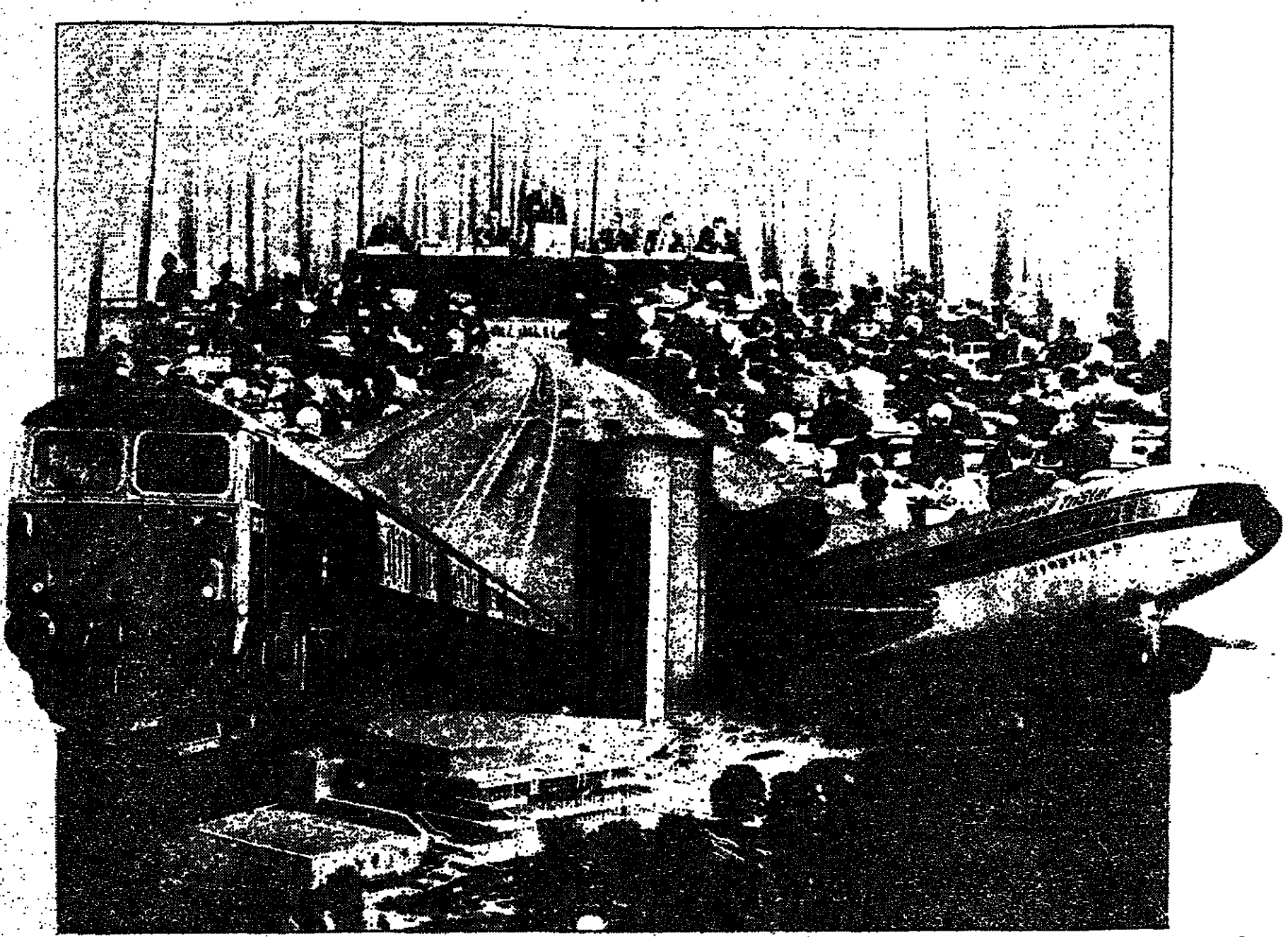
There is an even cheaper package available featuring Zurich and costing only £61 a person, while six nights in Barcelona costs £83. Here, for an extra £20 a head, the airline will throw in the full board supplement, a day excursion, a party and a gala dinner. Other destinations on special offer include Copenhagen, Lisbon, Madrid and Stockholm.

'An overseas conference need not be expensive, particularly if an organizer can be a little flexible in his arrangements to enable the use of the best possible fares', says Margaret Hopper, who is superintendent of BA's Convention Bureau.

'The problem for many companies at present is that they cannot be seen to be spending money even though funds may be available.

If some organizations are finding spending difficult to justify, others are discovering the advantages of travel incentive schemes, some of which are coupled to a conference or convention. These are becoming very popular, their value being greatly enhanced now that a holiday abroad is becoming more difficult for many people.

In the United Kingdom, there are believed to be more than 25,000 corporate meetings a year with an average attendance of less than 100 people. The asso-



Montage: Trevor Sutton

Established conference resorts like Blackpool, the Isle of Man and Llandudno, which rely heavily on trade union and association traffic, will probably be less affected in the months ahead. Many of the more cost-conscious are looking at the alternatives, such as universities, which still offer outstanding value for money despite inflation.

On the other hand, Blackpool, which last year was host to both the major political parties and the TUC, takes a lot of beating.

There is certainly plenty of evidence that organizers are becoming more selective in their choice of venue and are shopping around, both for conferences at home and abroad, for the best prices. Many of the more cost-conscious are looking at the alternatives, such as universities, which still offer outstanding value for money despite inflation.

It is estimated that conference business is worth almost £5m to the resort, which attracted 62,000 delegates in 1975.

In the south, Brighton is the only resort capable of accommodating the larger events and its new £8m, 5,000-seat centre will provide a valuable boost to business. Although it is not due to open until next year, it already has more than 70 national and international events booked, representing a 70 per cent occupancy in the first year.

Europe is the dominant area for international congresses and conventions. Western Europe has 62.7 per cent of all meetings and 55.4 per cent of all attendances. Paris, London, Geneva, Brussels and Rome are the most popular cities, while Amsterdam, Berlin, Jersey, Malaga and Malta rate highly among organizers of corporate meetings, product launches and so on.

London's position is unique. As well as attracting a growing flow of conference traffic from EEC convention planners and

countries, it has been luring a steadily increasing number of organizations across the North Atlantic. Among its coups last year was the first meeting outside North America of the Canadian Institute of Association Executives and a similar first with the International Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaux.

It also hosted the international committee of the American Society of Association Executives, which is the largest association of conference planners and

organizers, with a membership of 5,000 trade and professional bodies representing 28 million conference delegates.

In the reverse direction, Canada is reported to be one of the popular destinations for international medical conferences. A Brighton firm of conference organizers, which set up a specialist subsidiary six months ago, reports a boom in business.

'With all these special promotional lures on the North Atlantic, Canada becomes a very attractive destination for the conference delegate', according to Mr George McNair, a director of Medical Conference Travel Service.

Specialization is perhaps the key to the conference organizing business. Somewhat surprisingly, few travel agents have got deeply involved in the market.

Many have dabbled unsuccessfully, leaving it to a handful of knowledgeable companies. One of the leaders is Lep Travel, whose managing director, Mr Fred Wakefield, was recently elected vice-president of the influential International Congress and Convention Association, which has members in more than 60 countries.

ICCAs members are bound to respond to what the US Department of Commerce describes in its market analysis as a 'major competitive opportunity', a growing need for professional assistance created by the trend towards smaller events.

One of the highlights this year, which will have a direct bearing on the question of professionalism, will be an event at Grosvenor House, London, in April. Sponsored by the British Tourist Authority, with the English Tourist Board, the London Convention Bureau and the Association of Conference Executives closely involved, Conference '76 will probably be the most comprehensive presentation of communication techniques seen.

With names like Ford, Air Products, IPC, J. Walter Thompson, Johnson Wax, Kellogg's, IBM and British Telecom among the programme advisers, and David Frost and James Burke on the billing, it should be a must for anyone in the group communication business.

The author is deputy editor, Travel Trade Gazette.

## Are you getting full value from your conferences? You ought to know about the Wembley Conference Centre.

On Wembley Stadium's doorstep a building is opening next September which has to be the most complete and sophisticated conference centre London is likely to see for many years to come.

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# Firms provide bread and butter business

by Valerie Gilbert

The conference industry just grew. Economic crises may come and go, but they appear to have little effect on the need for organisations to meet and discuss progress and difficulties from year to year. The net result in the past 50 years has been the growth of a multi-million pound business today. People on the fringe of this industry may find this hard to believe but when you consider that every company, trade union, association, society and charity holds at least one meeting a year, then the extent on the conference industry becomes apparent.

However, the bread and butter of the meetings business is the corporate or company conference. An extensive network of service organisations has been developed to meet the needs of this market. But what are the needs of a company conference and how does a company conference planner go about satisfying them? How does he ensure that his conference will be successful?

When the trimmings are pared away, the needs of the company conference are startlingly simple: a room suitable to confer in; facilities to ensure that the conference message—whatever it may be—is put across in the most effective manner; food and drink—lavish or simple; efficient transportation to the conference venue; delegates accommodation if the meeting is for more than one day; and efficient processing of the delegates so that they know where the conference is being held, why it is being held and have all the necessary documentation.

Being connected with the large and profitable meetings industry can mean that an established company conference planner is hindered rather than helped by the flow of literature and information which he receives as a matter of course in an attempt to satisfy his meetings needs. Hotels, airlines, business house travel agents, conference cities, audio visual aid companies, caterers, professional confer-



The 2,700-seat Wembley Conference Centre, London, is due to open in September.

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# Making happy associations

by Patrick O'Leary

Whenever two or three of Conference Towns has people have an interest in between 50 and 60 members, common, they get together and many more offer a civic-backed welcome.

Seaside resorts, Brighton, Blackpool, Scarborough and Bournemouth among them, are naturally prominent in the industry, together with conference, where the talk can be channelled into constructive lines in a bracing atmosphere.

The year just past produced the normal pattern of such gatherings, from that promoted by the Association of British Barber Shop Singers to a symposium under the auspices of the Royal Microscopical Society. A degree of earnestness was every time. This is mally marks such meetings—after all, many have to be justified on expense accounts.

Serious talk was presumably easy to maintain when the Cement and Concrete Association met. But it must have been difficult to avoid well away from industrial cities and Whitehall, where it is impossible to ignore the evidence of their blunders. Some meetings and places seem made for each other: the English Congress of the Prophetic World decided to meet in Israel.

The postwar explosion in the number of universities, with bursars glumly surveying unused residence halls and lecture rooms during the long vacation, has generated much more use of academic accommodation for conferences. One of the best customers is the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

It has been meeting annually at different universities for more than a century. Hundreds of scientists assembled at the University of Surrey in Guildford last August and September.

Summer is the silly season when headline-hunters prowl through many mass conferences, their sights on the press table. Even journalists' own meetings have been known to produce hilarious copy.

It cannot be said of conference organizers that they are reluctant to take their own medicine. If not running other people's meetings, they congregate at their own. These are held under the auspices of associations with unlikely initials, such as ACE, ICCA and BACT. Members often belong, either collectively or individually, to each other's organizations.

Some have special shows to promote the latest aids and ideas. These produce more cryptic titles, "see you at IJCEM", "so long until MIVICO", or "forget it until Conference 76" the happy wanderers tell each other.



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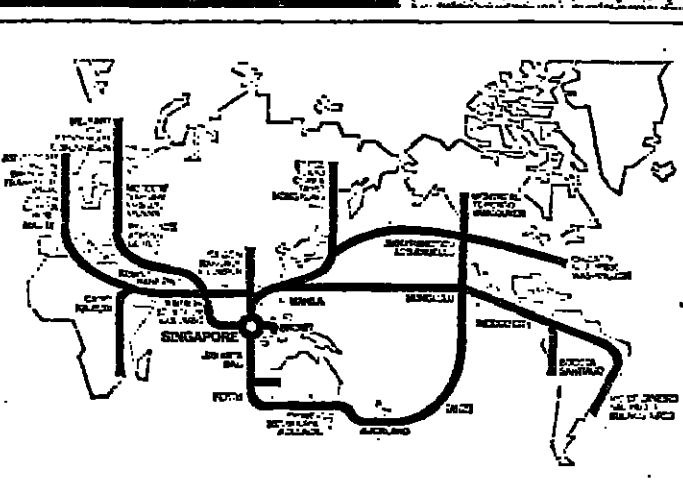
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# Britain becomes conventionally popular

London and Paris are rivals for the position of leading international conference city, but from the British point of view it is encouraging to note that in 1974 there was a 50 per cent increase in the number of international conferences taking place in Britain outside London. Taking these two facts together it is apparent that Britain is becoming increasingly popular as a venue for international conventions and congresses.

London has always been popular even when its facilities seemed fairly inadequate for large meetings—for example the American Bar Association event of 1971 with 16,000 people involved. However, in the past few years the position has improved in London and large conferences can now be accommodated at several new, large hotels. Furthermore, the change is not yet complete—in September, the 2,700-seat Wembley Conference Centre is due to open and two years later the Barbican Centre is expected to be ready.

It is work outside London which is more indicative of the importance with which Britain is treating the international congress business. For a start there is the National Exhibition Centre at Birmingham. This project is to include a modern convention centre, housed in the Birmingham Metropole Hotel, on the NEC site. The hall will accommodate 1,800 delegates and will have all modern conference facilities.

The hotel will cater for conference visitors with 500 twin-bed rooms offering amenities such as private bathroom, air-conditioning, television, radio and direct dial telephone. A special feature of the Metropole's facilities will be a 200-seat cinema, designed for showing trade films by day and entertainment films by night.

An even bigger convention complex is due to open in Brighton in the spring of 1977. The 5,000-seat centre will bring Brighton important earnings from major international congresses and will provide another large centre for the meetings of British organisations. Such organisations often have to seek overseas venues for their large meetings because of inadequate facilities in Britain, but increasing air fares are making this more difficult.

Existing conference facilities in Brighton are fairly impressive. Municipal venues include the Dome, with seating for 2,100; the Corn Exchange, which takes about 1,000; the Pavilion Theatre, which seats 250; and the

Royal Pavilion, with six meeting rooms of varying size. In addition, there are numerous hotels, of which the Metropole is probably the best known, which specialise in conferences.

Essexhouse, only a few miles from Brighton, has the Congress Theatre. This impressive building was specially designed for conventions of up to 2,000 delegates, of whom 1,000 can be accommodated at stalls level with a raked floor providing an uninterrupted view of the conference platform. The theatre is linked to a restaurant which is in turn linked to the Winter Garden, containing the Floral Hall, with seating for 1,500 delegates and the Pavilion seating 475 delegates.

Harrogate, already internationally established as an exhibition and convention centre, has a major convention complex. And in the course of the past few years convention complexes have been mooted by Bournemouth and Scarborough, two other important provincial conference towns.

The difficulty besetting all provincial municipalities regarding large modern convention centres is, of course, the cost, which can run to several million pounds. In a time of inflation it is extremely difficult to budget ahead for any project and councils have well known additional troubles to bear. On the other hand, a modern well-equipped convention complex can greatly increase the wealth of an already established provincial conference town. But it is the town as a whole that benefits, not the convention complex as a single unit and thus, on the whole, private enterprise cannot be interested in such a project.

For several years there has been discussion about a major conference complex for Scotland and plans have been put forward for both Edinburgh and Glasgow. In Wales there are plans to convert the Coal Exchange in Cardiff to a 1,000-seat convention hall. Plans for devolution may add impetus to these schemes.

There are, however, two aspects of the international congress market which sometimes appear not to be fully appreciated in Britain. First, an international association does not have total freedom of choice when it comes to choosing venues for its important congresses. In most cases it has to be invited by the member association of the host country and that host association will probably find itself paying a fair amount of the bill for the congress. The result of this is that even with modern,

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## Price-saving packages to promote trade on a foreign shore

by Robin Mead



last November Mr Hugh Henry, managing director of the industrial holiday firm, was told that he had to spend £4,000 on sending about 20 of his departmental managers and other executives to a travel industry conference on the other side of the Atlantic.

They left their offices in the firm's headquarters, Herfordshire, on a Friday, flew to Florida, visited Disney World, attended the three-day Association of British Travel Agents conference in Miami Beach, then each had a holiday of their own choice. Some went to the Bahamas, Mexico, Jamaica, Costa Rica, and various parts of the United States mainland. Ten days later they were back in Britain.

Mr Henry says: "We got a lot of value from the whole exercise. Tremendous staff loyalty for a start, and a much more lively insight because everyone was so impressed with what they saw in America."

"We have already copied the American model with our telephone reservations service—lots of courtesy on the telephone. Then again, travel can only broaden your horizons, and many of our younger executives were able to meet up with our operations and retailers for the first time at the Miami Beach conference."

Miami Beach, with its huge, purpose-built convention centre able to hold 20,000 delegates, its many hotels and other accommodation, and its pleasant climate, is particularly well suited to being host to conferences. The United States, business-minded and endlessly hospitable, is a destination worth more than a second glance when it comes to choosing a venue for an overseas conference.

Whatever your subject, America seems to have a suitable symposium. International events in the United States, during the next few months, for example, include the soft drinks exposition in Dallas, Texas, the international beauty show in New York, the gas turbine conference in New Orleans, the concrete and aggregate show in Houston, and in Cleveland, Ohio, the formidably named conference on analytical chemistry and applied spectroscopy.

**A welcome—American style. Drum majorettes entertain at the Convention Centre, Miami Beach, which can accommodate 20,000 delegates.**

Along with the demand for such specialist international events, there has been a corresponding growth in firms which can produce a price-saving package for British companies wishing to make up a business party to attend such events, or even to arrange their own overseas conference.

As far as the United States is concerned, it is worth looking at the Pan Am World brochure, which puts this fairly new area of business firmly on the travel agent's counter. Working through specialist firms like Albany Travel (100 Oxford Street, London), Pan Am can supply tailor-made conference group packages. These, in some instances, mean that the price for each delegate attending an exhibition in, say, New York, and including air travel, accommodation, transfers, conference fees, and the cost of attending all related events, may be no more than the price of a normal economy class return transatlantic air ticket.

Mrs Margaret Hopper, British Airways convention bureau, said people preferred to go abroad for conferences rather than use the facilities provided in many British towns because "going abroad need not necessarily cost any more than holding a conference in Britain, especially if you go off-season." People found that their staff felt "better thought of" if they went abroad; it was good for morale.

She said firms gave three major reasons for going overseas: to link up with the representatives of a parent or subsidiary company (a factor which accounts for the heavy traffic to the United States), to take the opportunity of seeing retailers or distributors, and as an incentive to staff.

The last point is of great importance. An overseas excursion means that delegates are isolated from the distractions of home and office and, in the words of Mrs Hopper, "going overseas can make a dull conference exciting."

Firms tend to be cautious at first, when it comes to choosing a destination. As an experiment they may go to Jersey, which has excellent facilities, then perhaps to an accessible European city like Amsterdam.

Then the organizers start looking for an even more distant venue—and there is a strong demand for warm and sunny places like Bermuda, the Bahamas and Jamaica, although such distant places seem to be most popular with the international "pay-your-own-way" conferences rather than a limited conference run and paid for by a company or group of companies.

As a guide to destinations, British Airways has produced a book called *Meeting Place*, which is being launched this month as a guide to conference hotels around the world.

National tourist offices can also give useful advice. The French Tourist Office in Piccadilly, London, has a business travel department which will help to organize conferences.

Milan and Vienna are popular European venues, while the businesslike Germans have about 40 towns catering for conferences. Hamburg has a new purpose-built conference centre with room for 3,000 delegates in the main hall, as well as other spacious accommodation, an adjacent hotel, and other hotels within walking distance.

Düsseldorf and Hanover are also popular. Hanover has an assembly hall holding 3,600 people, but central hotel accommodation is considered by many to be limited. A conference centre is due to open in West Berlin soon.

"The transport and accommodation side of a conference is fairly straightforward," Mrs Hopper said. "We can advise people on where to go, how to get there, recommend hotels, and sort out excursions, and so on. But we do not set up the actual conference. We leave that to the company itself and the person in charge; or else there are professional conference organizers when it comes to arranging the programme and content."

British Airways had representatives in nearly every country who could recommend ground operators able to arrange even special events like factory visits.

"In short, we keep an eye on things and see that everything goes smoothly," Mrs Hopper said. "That smoothness, which cannot always be taken for granted overseas, must tell for the British Airways convention bureau, and others like it, have experienced a remarkable growth in business over the past few years. Some travel agents have found that it is worth specializing in conferences and conventions."

Besides those already mentioned, they include American Express; Thomas Cook; Conference and Group Travel of Brighton; Windsorian of Slough; and Rankin Kuhn. Any of them can tailor a package deal to suit a client's needs.

Those needs are likely to include ever wider horizons. "My department used to be concerned only with Europe," Mrs Hopper said. "but we have a fair number of requests for long-haul conference travel now, and I think that this demand will develop."

The department has not yet organized a conference in Australia, but it could happen soon.

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## Challenger on grand scale deserves support during teething troubles

by Patrick O'Leary

Birmingham is about to give birth to its largest baby, the 25m National Exhibition Centre. It has not received the blessing of some wicked nicks, who consider it an unwanted, misplaced child. For is the name inspiring? suggestion to prefix it by "Britannia" seemed more appropriate to the building society which has just bought the title.

But the project deserves real support during the inevitable teething troubles, which brings a long-awaited new dimension to the British exhibition scene, with buildings and equipment on the grand scale to compete with overseas rivals.

Nor is it likely that Birmingham will have a far-reaching effect on business in other cities. Even small countries such as Holland and Switzerland find it possible to support more than one exhibition.

Mr. E. J. O'Leary, managing director of the new centre, has said: "It is a site can stimulate business generally, probably because it forces existing promoters to over-haul their buildings and standards of service."

Harrogate has responded to the challenge with typical resilience, by passing plans to build a new conference centre with accompanying exhibition space. The town already has three linked exhibition halls, having steadily built up accommodation since deciding after the last war that its traditional role as a spa resort was no longer enough.

Initially, London is likely to be affected most by the Birmingham centre. Earls Court and Olympia are quick to emphasize that they are still very much in business, with long-term contracts for the Ideal Home Exhibition.

Earls Court opened in 1937, but one mordant commentator has said: "It is a lot younger than many of the organizers who claim it is too old."

Consideration was given to structural improvements which would have involved partial closure during 1977. But after careful study the owners decided on a modified scheme of modernization spread over the next few years. Although this will cost £1m, Earls Court will stay open throughout, most of the work being done between exhibitions.

Olympia is an older complex—the Grand Hall was completed in the nineteenth century and the National Hall in the 1920s. There the policy is to keep as much open as demand requires.

Even Olympia is appreciably younger than Alexandra Palace. This is still a venue for exhibitions in spite of needing hundreds of thousands of pounds simply to preserve it.

London will have a new combined conference and exhibition centre later this year, with completion of the Wembley project. It is significant of the way crafts follows the right product that it has already booked the exhibition and conference of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers for 1978. This division had previously held its gatherings in Brussels, Houston, Tokyo, San Francisco, Washington and Zurich.

The World Trade Centre, near Tower Bridge, and the Barbican Arts Centre, now under construction, are two other London developments which include some exhibition space.

All Britain's cities and larger towns offer venues of some kind, whether it be the bulk of Glasgow's Kelvin Hall and Manchester's Belle Vue, or the grace of York's

Assembly Rooms. The kind of accommodation offered is variable.

Because customers' demands are just as variable, a premium is placed on flexible and new construction. Movable walls, sinking floors, and rising ceilings are useful if a building is liable to house a boat show one week and half a dozen simultaneous seminars the next.

This approach avails an agonising choice for developers—whether they should build a large exhibition hall with a small conference hall attached, or the other way round. Very often the fashion has changed by the time the buildings are completed.

Brighton's conference centre, scheduled to open in 1977, will include exhibition space, and will also be used as a sports and entertainment centre. At Aberdeen already has a complex of exhibition halls attached to the Hotel Metropole. Hotels throughout the country, especially modern ones, incorporate halls for conferences and small exhibitions.

Showgrounds are expanding their share of the market. The National Agricultural Centre at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, boasts that with the combined use of buildings and open space it can house "a seminar for 30 people or an exhibition for 250,000."

Stafford County showground has New Square Hall, with 85,000 square feet under a one-span roof, and Newcastle upon Tyne has developed an exhibition park. Racecourses have found a profitable use for where when horses are elsewhere. Kempton Park was used for a six-day demonstration of cranes. At Aberdeen last year the former location of the Royal Highland Agri-

cultural Show was put under acres of canvas for an off-shore oil show in which more than 800 exhibitors took part.

It would be pleasant to believe the inauguration of the National Exhibition Centre, and the other developments in hand, herald a concerted effort by British industry to enlarge its share of the international cake. But there are dispiriting signs.

In November what was described as "one of the most important conferences for the industry since the war" was called in London. Entitled "Cost Effective Exhibition—When, Where, How?", it was sponsored by all sides of the industry and by the Confederation of British Industry. The conference did not take place. It was cancelled through lack of support.

## Budgets being restricted as facilities expand

by Richard Corser

Budgeting is now the prime essential of a conference organizer's brief. Gone are the days when a company chairman told his executives to arrange a prestige meeting regardless of cost.

Because of the economic situation companies have to restrict their promotional budgets and conferences now have to be accounted for to the last penny.

Ironically, the clampdown comes at a time when conference organizers have a much wider range of facilities and services on which to spend their hard fought for budgets.

For example, the presentation of conferences—the content of a meeting—has become a highly polished affair. The organizers show, a truly professional conference needs a producer who may use a range of devices such as special lighting, projectors and simultaneous interpretation equipment.

While budgeting for the basic essentials, such as hotel accommodation and catering, organizers face not only the burden of increased prices because of inflation but the knowledge that many companies have cut back on their spending. This can lead only to fewer conference delegates.

To gauge what an organizer of an international congress has to budget for, let us look at an example presented by Mr Donald Hellstrom, managing director of the Stockholm Convention Bureau, which organizes meetings in addition to promoting the facilities of the Swedish capital.

Based on a real three-day congress with international participation of 300 delegates and 100 accompanying family members—a small event in congress terms—gave a breakdown of the various cost items in the budget.

The formidable list includes 17 items: meeting facilities, social programme, accompanying persons' programme, catering, tours, technical equipment, personnel, printing, participants' kits, decorations and signs, transport, secretariat costs, accommodation, committees' costs, hospitality and contributions, miscellaneous, exhibition, professional organizer's fee. With printing costs of

more than £3,000 and catering costs of more than £15,000 there is a lot of sub-budgeting to be done. The total budget for the whole event is more than £30,000. And this is without delegate accommodation costs; in this particular case the participants had to find their own lodgings. If the event had been held in London, the cost would have been reduced.

For the organizers in Britain, prices vary according to their presentation needs and the areas where they want to stage an event.

The British organizers are more fortunate than their European counterparts because municipal facilities in the various cities and towns are provided free whereas in most European countries halls have to be hired.

**Hire of rooms is built into cost**

Where British hotels are concerned, if a company or society holds a residential conference—thereby providing the important overnight stays for the hotels—the hire of rooms for talks is built into the overall cost.

The hotels with more advanced conference facilities—and they are still in the minority—give basic daily inclusive conference rates per delegate. These can vary from about £31 in an internationally minded hotel such as the new London Inter-Continental to about £16 in the Grand Hotel, Brighton. There are cheaper rates in smaller country hotels. Such prices usually include overnight accommodation, all meals, coffee and tea breaks, as well as the hire of meeting facilities.

For the organizer looking for inclusive but first-class meeting facilities and student-type accommodation, a university should be considered. Despite inflation, they continue to offer good value for money, and it is still possible to buy an inclusive conference package for less than £7 a day. With well-equipped lecture halls, as well as superb sporting and recreational facilities, it is not difficult to see why universities are becoming increasingly popular.

Of course there are drawbacks. The campuses are available only during the vacation period, or some 16 to 20 weeks of the year. Student accommodation will not appeal to all delegates, and because a university is spread over a wide area, a 10-minute walk from accommodation to lecture theatre could be unpleasant in wet weather.

The universities have become increasingly aware of their potential as conference venues. A few years ago several of them got together to market their facilities on a collective basis. This body, the British Universities Accommodation Consortium, has since grown and membership is now more than 30.

The presentation of the conference content is becoming an important part of many meetings—and is growing in importance year by year. Such productions can cost a few hundred pounds or as much as £100,000.

The hardware needed to stage such presentations can be provided by hotels at negotiable rates, although some companies which hold several events each year buy their own equipment and have their own in-house production staff. The cost of other services relating to conferences—transport, women's programmes and so on—depends upon what is required. There are companies in all parts of Britain to cater for such needs.

The importance of budgeting is shown by the reaction of conference suppliers. Ask any hotelier, airline executive, or audio-visual expert about what he can offer and conversation is soon brought round to the organizer's own budget.

As Mr George McNair, of Conference and Group Travel, a Brighton-based company specializing in arranging meetings abroad, explained: "If a conference organizer comes to us with an inquiry we first ask how much budget he has available. Then we know which countries he can afford and can concentrate on setting up a programme."

The author is deputy editor, Conferences and Exhibitions.

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## THE BALANCE OF DETENTE

By agreeing to go to Moscow next week Dr Kissinger has shown his confidence that détente is still alive and breathing. His remarks about Angola, how his awareness that it is not in good health in Washington, as in Moscow and elsewhere, people are asking whether détente is producing the promised goods, and if so who is the main beneficiary. It is time for reassessment.

Western critics of détente say that Moscow is breaking the spirit and possibly the letter of the existing strategic arms limitation agreement and is paying no more than lip service to the need to control conventional arms in Europe. They point out that the Soviet Union is using American technology and grain to build up its strength while challenging Western interests in the Middle East, Portugal, Angola and elsewhere. They accuse the Soviet Union of doing little or nothing to implement the Helsinki agreements on human rights, and suggest that the West is giving far more than it is gaining.

In Moscow there are signs of equivalent critics suggesting that the Soviet Union should seek more advantage from, or in spite of, arms agreements, that it should be ready to take more risks in extending its power overseas, that it should make fewer internal concessions to Western liberal opinion, and that it should demonstrate more commitment to revolutionary ideology abroad. These critics have doubtless been encouraged by the declining authority of the American President and the political and economic troubles of the West as a whole, which have surprised communists whose theoretical belief in the contradictions of capitalism had long taken second place to admiration for its achievements. As a result the Russians seem to have hardened some of their attitudes. Their military effort continues unabated and apparently unaffected by claims to

have reduced military spending. Their attitude to the Salt agreements has been that of a taxpayer trying to outwit the tax inspector, for whether or not they have broken the letter of the agreements, their behaviour has been ambiguous, to say the least. In Portugal and Angola they have been more faithful than necessary to their doctrine that détente does not mean accepting the social or political status quo or staying out of "wars of liberation". Since the Helsinki agreements of August 1 they have made only a few token gestures towards implementation and have claimed that the agreements contain things they do not contain, such as endorsement of the Leninist principles of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems.

It therefore looks to many people in the West as if détente is not paying off. This is to take too pessimistic a view, but it may be judged not only by what it can be seen to have achieved but also by what it may have prevented and what the alternatives would have been. It has produced arms control agreements which are imperfect but better than none at all. It produced a Berlin agreement which has somewhat lowered tension in one of the main points of conflict in Europe. It has probably done something though not even to restore Soviet behaviour abroad. It has also done something, though not enough, to limit persecution of dissidents in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

It produced the Helsinki conference of last summer. Whatever the critics say this gave away nothing of substance. It certainly did not make permanent the frontiers of Europe or endorse the political status quo as the Russians hoped. Instead it put human rights on the agenda of détente and provided a character which is already being quoted by almost every persecuted intellectual, divided family,

oppressed minority, or would-be emigrant in Europe. Of course the practical results are limited. No realist expected them to be otherwise. But if the conference is seen as a lever for pushing evolution in the right direction it can scarcely have had effects — only good ones or none at all.

Thus the main answer to critics of détente is that the results are not as bad as they say and that anyway there is no sensible alternative to continuing to try to make it work. Yet there is an obvious need for caution. Détente is a risky policy. It means contributing through trade and other means to the power of the Soviet Union in the hope of influencing the way that power is used. It means giving the Soviet Union certain things it wants in order to get things the West wants. It must therefore be subject to continuous close scrutiny to ensure that the balance of advantage remains acceptable. There is no point in continuing to fulfil only one side of a bargain.

The danger of this happening is more acute now that the West is so absorbed in its own problems. But the Soviet Union has problems too. It is inefficient. It is seeking power in largely nineteenth century terms through heavy industry, large weapons and a multitude of warships. It has few ideas or innovations to offer the West or the Third World, and even the communist parties of Western Europe are breaking away. If its problems occasionally look more tractable than those of the West it is partly because its pace of change is slower and it largely avoids the dilemmas that surround a commitment to individual freedom, technology and social structures are taking place in the West. They are uncomfortable but potentially creative. A little more confidence could therefore be combined with the caution which the present phase of East-West relations demands.

## THE FUTURE OF POLLUTION CONTROL

The Alkali Inspectorate has not had as good a press in recent years as it deserves. Its Dickensian name, its reticence, its inbred air, its lack of sympathy with the modern campaigning spirit in environmental issues all tend to obscure its share of the credit for the great advances that have been made in the control of industrial pollution. The inspectorate has its own philosophy, and is immutably persuaded that it is the right one. Its staff are not trouble-shooters pouncing on every nasty smell; they cajole, they ask nothing of a manufacturer that it will bankrupt him to carry out. The results, as the standing Royal Commission on pollution confirmed in its latest report yesterday, are not to be sniffed at. But the inspectorate's patience and undue secretiveness about the details of its findings and criteria (a matter of legitimate public interest where there is a genuine threat to valuable trade secrets) have too often given the impression of insufficient zeal.

It was possibly with some idea of letting in a breath of fresh air that the Roberts committee recommended in 1972 that the

inspectorate should be amalgamated with the new commission on health and safety at work. Since the latter body deals partly with atmospheric emissions from factories that may affect the health of their workers, while the former is entirely concerned with the effect of those same emissions on the environment as a whole, the proposal had an obvious element of tidiness. However, yesterday's report argues with some force that it was misconceived. The commission is predominantly an alliance of industrial interest groups, whose aims will not necessarily always be identical to those of the public at large. The arrangement does carry a risk that the inspectorate might find itself actually, as it is often accused of being, in the pocket of industry.

In its former shape, however, it was at least in danger of losing the public confidence that it needs to command. It was also limited in a not very logical way to industrial emissions into the air. One kind of pollution can too easily be turned into another for a partial approach to be the most useful one. Smoke that is full of harmful dust can be cleaned by passing it through water; but the dirty water also

has to be disposed of. Liquid pollutants can be made solid, while discharges of reeking gas can be treated with filters that produce noise, which is itself another kind of pollution. The problem of disposing of wastes in the least offensive way is a single one.

The Royal Commission proposes a body to deal with these questions comprehensively, absorbing the inspectorate. Local authorities and water authorities would retain their existing powers to control pollution and to set standards, but the new body would provide central expert guidance. It must be hoped that it will have more fruitful relations with local government than the inspectorate sometimes has had. Rightly, it would continue to apply (but more openly) the criterion of the best practicable means of control, rather than fixing rigid universal emission standards. As Britain successfully argued recently in the councils of the EEC, flexible standards related to individual circumstances are better, so long as industrial and political interests are not given undue weight over environmental ones, and so long as it can be seen that they are not.

## THE LESSONS OF A BABY'S DEATH

The report of the enquiry into the death of the baby boy, Steven Meurs, from starvation and neglect in King's Lynn last April will probably lead to renewed criticism of the competence of social workers on the one hand and on the other to renewed demands that the Government and local authorities devote more resources to social services. These two opposing conclusions were drawn by many politicians and members of the public from the circumstances surrounding the death of Maria Colwell three years ago. The similarity between the two tragedies is such that similar conclusions are likely to be drawn again today.

Yet neither is entirely justified on the evidence of this report. Although the members of the enquiry have not hesitated to criticise individual workers (and to exonerate others), their report also illuminates the severity of social distress which on occasion social workers are expected to solve quietly and cheaply. It would be unfortunate if the public came to believe that such tragedies could be easily prevented and that severe cases of child neglect were only allowed to occur by the laziness or incompetence of social workers. Equally the report gives little support to the contrary argument that the deaths of future Maria Colwells and Steven Meurs can be prevented by a

substantial increase in the resources allocated to social services. It concedes that Norfolk employs fewer fieldworkers than the average local authority and that some of those involved in this tragic case were overworked. However, the main difficulty seemed to have arisen from the uneven distribution of social workers (and health visitors) through the county rather than any outstanding shortage. In any case the failure to prevent the death of Steven Meurs was not the fault of the social workers, but rather the opposite.

Instead two less remarkable but perhaps more appropriate conclusions can be drawn from the failure to prevent the tragedy. The first concerns the failure of communication between the many agencies involved with the Meurs' household. Between October, 1974, and Steven's death in the following April several social workers, the local social security office, the family doctor, the health visitor, the probation officer, the police and the local inspector of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children were all concerned with the case.

Yet no case conference of all those involved was ever held to compare notes and some remained entirely unaware of the intervention of others or misunderstood what had been discovered by others. It was to prevent just such confusion that

the Seeborn committee in 1968 recommended the creation of integrated social services departments. The persistence of these confusing demarcations eight years later is some indication of how badly understood and applied are the administrative reforms proposed by Seeborn, particularly at a local level. This local understanding has not been encouraged by the lack of commitment to these same principles of integration and coordination at a national level. The division between social services and the former local authority health services (now under the area health authorities) presented particular difficulty in this case. The second conclusion is that there is some evidence in this report to justify the concern felt by some about recent developments in social work training. Unlike their older colleagues who were trained in specialized skills such as child care, most younger social workers have received a more general training with greater emphasis on theory. Similarly more experienced social workers are often more sceptical of the motives of those they are employed to help, while younger workers like to feel more committed to the interests of their "clients". A little more scepticism and a little less commitment might have saved the life of Steven Meurs — and his mother from serving a prison sentence.

### Poor Pierrot

From Mr R. R. Henshaw  
Sir, Richard Holmes' absorbing account of "Poor Pierrot" in your issue of January 10 contains the statement that the Commedia dell'Arte were banished from Paris

in 1697 "to protect the drama of Molière" but I think that this may be open to question.  
For St Simon in his *Mémoires* under the same year tells us quite clearly that Louis XIV sent them packing on account of their piece "The Mock Prince" in which it was easy to recognize Madame de

Maintenon (whom the King married in 1697).  
The Duchess of Orleans is said to have remarked, apropos of the play, that "the Actors hit off the old slut most drolly".  
I am, yours faithfully,  
R. R. HENSHAW,  
6 Lansdown Crescent, Bath.

## Future of British film industry

From Mr Michael Winner

Sir, As a long-time member of the British film industry I found it salutary that the impressive participants on the Working Party regarding the future of the British film industry came up with a lot of nonsense, whilst your brief leader was eminently sane.

If the British film industry is in crisis, and has not done well for some time, then the Government placing five million pounds per annum at its disposal is unlikely to suddenly make it profitable. Nor do I accept that this five million, plus another million which it is proposed be taken from the industry's own Eady Fund, will produce from the National Film Corporation a further nine million pounds.

If the professional motion picture companies in this country have refused to provide the necessary finance to make these additional British pictures because they consider it too risky a venture, then why should the Government's money suddenly put the film industry on a secure basis? Indeed all government money pumped into the National Film Finance Corporation over the years has been lost (except for a recent small donation they haven't yet gone through), and there is no practical reason to believe this new amount, even though administered by a newly created agency, will not be lost also.

I believe, nevertheless, it is worth supporting British films as an art form, in the way that for example the theatre is given aid. This is on the basis of encouraging worthy ventures that become a credit to the nation in general. Furthermore, in the theatre participation is obtained from the more highly paid, such as actors, who work at the National Theatre for often as little as 10 per cent of what they could get on the commercial stage.

If the Government were to give money to films on this basis costs could be kept well below the norm by stars, directors, producers, and even distributors, working for less than the normal fee, which I believe they would do for the pleasure of working in projects of particular merit which might not normally be made in a medium catering to mass taste.

It is also likely, as in the National Theatre, that some of the projects would be profitable and contribute to this fund. Also that actors and directors would come from this area into the more highly paid international and/or British commercial cinema thus engendering further jobs and high salaries for the government's tax. This is much as you suggested and seems the only honest way to put forward a plea for money for the film industry.

A serious, though more unpopular area, is the problem of massively subsidising the cost of production. I estimate that the average cost of a feature film is £1.2 million and 98 per cent of interest on what you manage to save) that cause many of our talented and highly paid producers, directors, writers and stars to remove themselves to other countries, with the loss of jobs for others who would work in this country if these people, "bankable" within the film world, stayed here and worked here. Whilst the White Paper appreciates this, it does nothing to alleviate them. Spreading earnings over a few years does nothing to induce these vital people to remain.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL WINNER, Director,  
Scimitar Films Ltd,  
6-8 Sackville Street, W1,  
January 15.

## Foreign correspondents

From Mr Philip Jacobson

Sir, Having been arrested and jailed for a few days as a "spy" by the Indian authorities during the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, I am in complete agreement with Louis Heren's criticism of the *Washington Post* article by Mr Bernard Novitsky. As Mr Heren says (January 14), foreign correspondents do not expect special treatment or privileges, but the sort of allegations presented by Mr Novitsky can only make life more difficult and potentially more dangerous.

Northern Ireland provides an excellent example: the main reason why no journalist has been hurt there during more than five years of hostilities is because we have, by and large, convulsed the various factions involved that we are not seen as taking sides and so on. There have been occasional alarms among the Catholic and Protestant communities about the alleged infiltration of "spies" — but as far as we know, there is no evidence that any journalist accredited to a British newspaper, radio station or television network has been doubling as an agent of British intelligence.

Mr Novitsky, who has himself worked in Northern Ireland, should know how quickly and easily all sorts of rumour spreads among the tense and suspicious communities there. What if *The Times* were to suggest, on no more substantial evidence than that presented in Mr Novitsky's article, that he was in fact, an agent of the CIA assigned to infiltrate and report on the Provisional IRA? However untrue, the story would very quickly be played back in Northern Ireland, just as Mr Novitsky's allegations against British journalists will be. Would he feel wholly secure returning to Belfast after that?

There have been, probably still are, part-time agents among the British press, but they cover major foreign stories. But presenting generalized, unsubstantiated allegations, Mr Novitsky merely endangers all his British colleagues (and, one could argue by extension, all other foreign correspondents). If he has names, prove them. The journalists concerned would surely stop doing this type of work.

Yours faithfully,  
PHILIP JACOBSON,  
*The Sunday Times*,  
PO Box 7,  
200 Gray's Inn Road, WCI,  
January 14.

## Financial responsibility on devolution

From Dr David King

Sir, It is encouraging to see you arguing the case for the proposed Scottish Assembly to have greater taxing powers of its own than the average of rates suggested in the Government's White Paper. It is worth drawing attention to three drawbacks of the proposed financial scheme which relies almost totally on a block grant, quite apart from the inevitability of its producing annual deficits.

First, the proposed rate surcharge would give very little flexibility to the total funds available to the Assembly. A 10 per cent surcharge would enable it to increase its expenditure by only some 2 per cent. It is true that the surcharge might also apply to any new local taxes suggested by the Leyland Committee. It is difficult to see a government which is reluctant to give any real independent taxing powers to a Scottish Assembly being prepared to concede much more taxing power to local authorities.

Secondly, it would be very difficult for the Assembly to alter the pattern of its expenditure. Resen-

tially, the grant would be computed so that each service could be provided at the same level as in England. To provide an above-standard level in one service, the Assembly would be practically forced to provide a sub-standard level in another. This could be hard to achieve, politically, and would not allow Scottish residents to raise the level of any service by reducing consumers' expenditure and increasing tax payments.

Thirdly, placing financial responsibility for devolved services on the central government will inevitably place overall general political responsibility in the same place. The Commission on the Constitution argued that the central government's general political responsibility for local services led to central influence over local authorities' detailed expenditure plans. If devolution is to be real, then substantial financial autonomy is essential.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID N. KING,  
56 Kingsgate Street,  
Winchester, Hampshire,  
January 14.

## Consulting Scots over the border

From Mr C. W. S. Hartley

Sir, May I strongly endorse Mr Adam Ferguson's *Advertiser* (Letters, January 13). "Can the Scots be satisfied?" your leader asks. Who, Sir, are the Scots? Only people who live in Scotland. Certainly not the real Scots who have been migrating into England as previously many English migrated into Scotland. How many millions in England and Wales are by descent pure or more than half Scottish? I myself was born of parents both of whom were born in Scotland and am seven eighths Scottish by descent.

Will we, the multitudes of British Scots who have freely and happily moved around the country, agree to our stay-at-home brothers and sisters separating themselves from us under the widely discredited name of nationalism. No, Sir, we will not.

Yours faithfully,  
C. W. S. HARTLEY,  
The Gables,  
Stroud, Gloucestershire,  
January 13.

From the Rev Dr W. D. Omond

Sir, Mr Adam Ferguson is wrong if he thinks that all his fellow countrymen living in England are opposed to the SNP's stand for an independent Scotland, with complete freedom to administer its own affairs. I for one, a native of Perth and of Orkney and West Highland ancestry, would welcome a return to the status we had from the days of King James the Sixth and First until corruption and treason robbed us of our birthright in the time of Queen Anne.

Independence and "separatism" are not the same thing. Scotland will not be separated from England so long as we have the monarchy,

## Cuts in public spending

From the General Secretary of the National and Local Government Officers Association

Sir, Bernard Levin had a field day on Wednesday (January 14) besporting himself at the expense of a community scheme suggested by West Midlands County Council. He seemed to think that this was something to do with the arguments of my union — with which he is lamentably unfamiliar (even to the extent of getting its name wrong) — against the damaging effects of cuts in public spending.

The point of Nalga's campaign is to persuade the Government to change its course before it is too late and irreparable damage is done to services needed by the community — and particularly the most deprived. Transport, education, social services — all are suffering this year and plans for what is to follow (as a necessary percentage of Personal Disposable Income) than before the war. We may not be able to say this before long if the Government's policy does not change. To back away at public spending as though this will, at a stroke, lop off the head of inflation is economic naïveté.

Yours faithfully,  
GEORGE DRAIN,  
General Secretary,  
National and Local Government Officers Association,  
Nalga House,  
8 Harewood Row, NW1.

## Blind visitors to Chelsea Flower Show

From Mr Colin Low

Sir, To blind people, the sort of insensitive and unimaginative rejection instigated by Lord Snowdon in his letter (*The Times*, January 14) about the exclusion of guide dogs from the Chelsea Flower Show, is all too familiar. At worst, it is simply a specific instance of the general prejudice against blind people which on occasion excludes them from our cinema, night clubs and worst of all of course, jobs. At best it is an example of the slavish and bureaucratic application of health regulations to keep blind people accompanied by their guide dogs out of restaurants, food shops and the like — even then, it is hard to see why flower shows, and at that apparently only the Chelsea Flower Show, should need such special protection. Even then, there is no excuse for this.

The Minister has stated in Parliament that it is expected that such regulations will be interpreted with common sense where blind people with guide dogs are concerned, and has recognised the standards of hygiene and discipline displayed by these animals. The New Zealand Parliament has indeed exempted guide dogs from laws restricting the access of dogs to certain kinds of public place, and my federation believes that similar legislation will have to be introduced here if people continue to display the same sort of obstinacy as the Royal Horticultural Society. One must simply give thanks that there are people around with the humanity and insight of Lord Snowdon, and hope

## Detention of Mr Garfield Todd

From Mr Richard Acton

Sir, Sunday will be the fourth anniversary of the arrest and apparently endless detention of my father-in-law, Garfield Todd, the only living former Prime Minister of Rhodesia.

He was detained in 1972 for advocating constitutional talks between white and black leaders in preference to the Conservative Government's Rhodesian Front "settlement" with Mr Smith.

Lord Pearce, sent to test opinion on the proposed "settlement", found an overwhelming "No" in the black Rhodesia. As regards the detention of Garfield Todd (and three others, subsequently released) Lord Pearce found "these detentions were an interference with normal political activities which the British Government" had guaranteed.

Now white and black Rhodesian leaders are having constitutional talks. But the ludicrous situation continues that the only white statesman who commands widespread black Rhodesian respect and affection is detained incommunicado on his farm for the "crime" of advocating that such talks take place. Perhaps the British Government will inquire in Salisbury and Pretoria if Garfield Todd, now aged 67, is to be the last Rhodesian detainee who will ever be released. Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD ACTON,  
95 Ebury Street, SW1,  
January 13.

## Hereditary tenant farms

From Miss Joan Quennell

Sir, Mr Garst's very good letter (January 10) misses a very important point in the proposed amendment to the Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill. Hereditary tenancies will undoubtedly be of value. As such, they will therefore be susceptible to Capital Transfer Tax on the death of a tenant farmer if the tenancy is passed on to his heir.

On the death of the owner of the land, the same farm will again attract Capital Transfer Tax.

It is hard to think of any other industry from which capital will bleed so regularly and frequently. Investment, either by tenant or landlord with most certainty cease, and since the tenant has already lost his cottage, one wonders what the outlook for farming tenants will be in, say, 25 years' time. Yours faithfully,  
JOAN QUENNEL,  
Dangstun,  
Rogate,  
near Petersfield,  
Hampshire,  
January 10.

## Paying for sewerage

From Mr P. K. L. Danks

Sir, There seems to be a lot of special pleading about this subject. The writer of your second leader (January 9) is obviously connected to the main sewer and wants his use of it subsidised by those not on the mains.

Lord Boyd-Carpenter (January 10) wants to pay the sewerage charge so that he can have his cesspit emptied twice a year for nothing.

Do not wish to contribute to either the cost of main drainage or the emptying of cesspits because I have a septic tank which never needs emptying, and therefore costs neither the public nor myself anything at all.

Yours truly,  
P. K. L. DANKS,  
The Manor House,  
Cotesfield Green,  
Whiteparish,  
Salisbury,  
January 12.

## Price of potatoes

From Mr M. W. Bunbury

Sir, Mr Cadbury (January 11) has already covered some of the correct assumptions made by Mr Byron Jones (January 8) about the cause of the rise in the price of potatoes. As a grower of potatoes may I add the following points. First, no commercial grower of any significant acreage would fail to apply artificial fertilizer to his crop. Potatoes use a considerable quantity of fertilizer, and in our case one cost of fertilizer per acre is three times as great as for wheat, and that cost rose by 97 per cent in the year to February, 1975.

Secondly, potatoes are extremely labour intensive from before planting up to the point of sale. They require regular spraying and irrigation throughout the growing season if maximum yields are to be obtained. We estimate that labour costs per acre are at least six times as great as for wheat. Thirdly, we have received for our potatoes this season some five times as much rain as last season. The consumer, via the distribution system, has bid us for our potatoes, and as there is a cartel of potato producers, the price has risen to the point at which demand is in equilibrium with supply.

This season the national yield of potatoes was low and, as in any market, a reduced supply has resulted in a rise in the price to the point at which demand is sufficiently reduced to match the supply. This is the only practical way, short of rationing, for the allocation of an annual crop over the following year's harvest. No Whitehall decree can succeed in holding down the price of an annual commodity for which there is a vast demand unless formal rationing is introduced.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL BUNBURY,  
Naughton Hall Farms,  
Rendlesham,  
Woodbridge, Suffolk.  
  
Franglais  
From Lady Pedder  
Sir, Television events in France are announced by "La Française" — a true daughter of the EEC? Yours faithfully,  
LUCIE PEDDER,  
Langhurst,  
Haslemere,  
Godalming, Surrey.

سورة الاحقاف







# THE TIMES

## BUSINESS NEWS

### Bank frees 25m deposits prevent rise in interest rates

phers Wilkins, the Bank's chief economist, said that the Bank of England had returned to the market in an effort to prevent a short-term rise in interest rates.

The Bank is an independent one in that it only has a temporary licence to issue banknotes. It will be able to issue banknotes of £5 and £10 but will have to be issued with the Bank of England's approval.

The Bank's decision to issue banknotes of £5 and £10 is a move away from the traditional £1 and £2 notes. The Bank's decision to issue banknotes of £5 and £10 is a move away from the traditional £1 and £2 notes.

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### any sales stop use bond as 'tap' stock

London government bond, 9½ per cent 1980, will be used as a "tap" stock, intended to be used by the Treasury to raise money for the public sector.

The Treasury has announced that it will use the 9½ per cent 1980 bond as a "tap" stock. This means that the Treasury will be able to raise money for the public sector by selling the bond.

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### Keith urges state sector cuts

subject to the restructuring, and only the "would need to go", the whole economy is in a state of "stop-go".

Mr Keith, the Conservative Party's spokesman, has urged the government to cut the state sector. He said that the state sector is too large and that it is a drain on the economy.

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### £23m rights from Ocean Transport

By Adrienne Gleeson  
Ocean Transport & Trading, which operates one of Britain's largest fleets of cargo liners, is to raise £23.2m through a one-for-four rights issue at 110p. The money will provide the resources for expansion of the group's shipping and other interests.

The board takes the view that the current depressed state of the world's shipping industry provides a good opportunity to replace part of the existing cargo liner fleet on favourable terms. There are, however, no immediate plans for placing orders.

Over the past year Ocean has been strengthening its already healthy balance-sheet by a series of disposals.

In particular, the group has now sold two of its three very large crude carriers, with the Tantalus going in 1974 for £14m and the Titan, the tanker whose charter was bound up in the problems of the Swedish shipowner, Mr Hilmar Reksten, was sold to Mobil.

The price is thought to have been around £6m. The group has also sold its half stake in China Navigation for some £6m.

After a forecast at the time of its interim report that profits for 1975 would amount to some £21m pre-tax, Ocean's directors have now, two weeks after the year-end, increased their forecast by £1m.

Of that, some £12m will be attributable to the contribution from associates, mainly from OCL; and of that in turn some £13m is attributable to a change in the accounting date.

Ocean's directors have forecast that the dividend for 1975 will be increased by the maximum permitted, and the new shares will rank for the final dividend.

Financial Editor, page 19

### Survey aims to improve quality of working life

A research programme into ways of improving the quality of working life is being sponsored by the Department of Employment.

A total of £207,000 has been allocated by the Department's Job Satisfaction Tripartite Steering Group to 10 universities and research institutes to enable them to carry out projects in conjunction with management, trade unions and employees.

### Japan shipyard output

The capacity of Japan's shipyards is expected to shrink by 1979 to around 7.1 million deadweight tons—only a quarter of the tonnage scheduled for 1976, according to the Japan Shipbuilders' Association.

The figures, issued yesterday, show that no tankers are likely to be built after 1979.

### Fewer French jobless

Total unemployment in France fell slightly in December to 921,200, seasonally adjusted, compared with 925,600 in November and 960,000 in October, 1974, the Labour Ministry stated in Paris. Vacancies increased to 106,600 from 99,200 at end-November and 144,400 a year earlier.

By Clifford Webb

### Shake-up of state chiefs on the way

By Maurice Corina  
Industrial Editor

An unprecedented shake-up among the men who run Britain's nationalised industries and state boards is expected soon. New chairmen are likely to be sought for the National Coal Board, the British Railways Board, the British Steel Corporation, the Central Electricity Generating Board, the Forestry Commission and the British Transport Docks Board.

Other appointments coming up for consideration include the chairmanship of the National Bus Company and the British Airports Authority.

While changes will not be made together, the Government is faced with a considerable problem in finding the right men to replace the current incumbents. Some of the current incumbents are well-known names, but others are less so.

The Government's new Public Appointments Unit is preparing a Whitehall register of state jobs while reviewing procedures for searching out talent for public sector posts, particularly among younger men. In turn, ministers are considering what changes can be made in certain state industries as contracts come up for renewal or expiry.

By July, a successor will be found for Sir Monty Phipps, chairman of the steel corpora-



Left to right: Mr D. Rooke, Sir Dan Pettit, Mr Nigel Foulkes, Sir Frank McFadden.

tion at a yearly salary of £28,100. He is 64 in August and his contract runs out just before the end of the year.

One name being canvassed around Whitehall is that of Sir Richard Marsh, who led the parliamentary struggle to re-nationalise steel and set up the corporation. Sir Richard's predecessor as chairman of British Rail is due to end immediately before Sir Monty's, and it is reported that he wants a change (his name has been mentioned as a possible successor to Sir Campbell Adamson as CBI director general, who has yet to reveal his own plans. These could lie in the state sector).

Uncertainty surrounds the future of Sir Derek Ezra, the £23,100-a-year chairman of the National Coal Board. Although only 57 and well-liked in government circles, it is suggested he may want a less demanding job for health reasons.

### Second post in BNOC goes to Lord Kearton

By Roger Vervoye  
Lord Kearton, chairman of the British National Oil Corporation (BNOC), is also to take on the post of chief executive, in charge of the day to day running of the organization.

His appointment to the dual post of chief executive and chairman of BNOC is a move which is thought to have been sanctioned by Mr Wedgwood Benn, the Secretary of State for Energy.

Mr Benn had originally hoped to appoint a senior executive from within the oil industry to the post of chief executive. His department ran a high pressure management recruiting campaign, but found a complete lack of enthusiasm for the job among oilmen.

Lord Kearton who was chairman of Courtfields before taking over at BNOC, is an accomplished businessman; but his knowledge and experience of the oil industry is limited.

The dual appointment is bound to attract criticism since it follows the controversial appointment of Lord Brighouse as a part-time member of the BNOC board.

Oil industry executives are concerned that a major executive industry that must ultimately be run by a private operating North Sea oilfield, has a board in which three of the members are over 60 and who have virtually no experience of the oil industry.

The oil industry has plenty of people to recruit experienced oilmen onto the board.

### Steel output lowest for almost 20 years

By Peter Hill  
Industrial Correspondent

Steel production in Britain last year sank to its lowest level for nearly 20 years. The drop was nearly 10 per cent on levels achieved the previous year.

Yesterday's published figures jointly last night by the British Steel Corporation and the British Independent Steel Producers' Association revealed that the steel industry produced 19.8 million tonnes in 1975, down from 21.8 million tonnes in 1974.

The previous lowest national steel output was recorded in 1958, when the industry produced 19.8 million tonnes. This slump in output reflects the worst world-wide economic recession since the Second World War.

Demand for steel in the United Kingdom has fallen by 14 per cent since 1974. There was a further weakening in demand among major steel-consuming sectors like the motor car and construction industries and a deterioration in heavy engineering activity.

At the same time steel consumers and stockholders who have been upping their stocks to high levels after disruption to their supplies in 1974 began to cut back their stocks over a wide range of products. This had further adverse effect on steel demand.

Both the state and private sectors of the industry, noting a near 23 per cent fall in production last month compared with November, are, however, optimistic that home and export markets will show some improvement this year.

Gold gained 50 cents an ounce to \$132.50. SDRs were 1.17433 on Thursday while SDRs were 1.579369. Commodities: Reuter's index was at 1199.5 (previous 1198.3). Reports pages 20 and 21

### On other pages

Business appointments 18  
Appointments vacant 23, 25  
Financial Editor 19  
Financial news 20, 21

Letters 18  
Diary 19  
Market reports 20, 21  
Wall Street 21  
Share prices 22

Bank Base Rates Table 21  
Company Meeting Reports 21  
Rediffusion National Glass 19  
Westland Aircraft 18

Board, whose chairman, Sir Humphrey Brown, is 65 years and whose appointment also comes up for consideration. Sir Humphrey is a part-time state boss with a record of profit-making rare in the public sector.

Another part-time chairman, due for renewal this year, is that of Mr Freddie Wood, of the National Bus Company. Also coming up for review is the part-time job of Mr Nigel Foulkes, head of the British Airports Authority. An appointment is also pending at the Forestry Commission, whose chairman has been Lord Taylor of Grylls.

Two men have left ministerial posts. Lord Beswick and Lord Balogh, to join the embryonic British Aerospace Corporation and the new British National Oil Corporation (the latter as deputy chairman). Mr D. Rooke, presently deputy, has been named chairman designate of the British Gas Corporation, while Sir Dan Pettit has recently been reappointed chairman of the National Freight Corporation executive. Sir Frank McFadden is leaving Shell to head British Airways.

Changes at the top of state enterprises could depend on advice given to the Government by the Public Appointments Unit, working with the head of the civil service. Another consideration will be the future levels of pay, for remuneration has been constrained.

### Rise in production index suggests recession may be over the worst

By Melvyn Westlake  
Evidence that the industrial recession may now have passed its worst and that output is on the road to recovery is contained in the latest production figures for a range of key sectors of the economy.

The Government index of production for all industries, published yesterday, shows a rise of 1.6 per cent, comparing the September-November period with the previous three months. In manufacturing alone there was a rise of 1.2 per cent between the two periods.

In spite of this upturn the increased output is a reflection of the ending of strikes which occurred in the steel, shipbuilding and engineering sectors during the late summer and, additionally, the increase in output following the end of the exceptionally warm summer.

However, the latest indications of increased activity corroborate other recent evidence, including the December industrial production figures, which showed a rise of 1.1 per cent on the November figure. For the first time in 18 months more companies surveyed by the CBI reported an increase rather than a fall in the value of new orders.

Although inflation must have accounted for some of this increase, the CBI did think that its survey might suggest some "overall" stabilization of activity.

Yesterday's output figures showed only a marginal rise in the "all industries" index for November (at 101.8, compared with 101.7 in the previous month), but the figure for October, at 101.6, was revised upwards by about 1 per cent.

Thus, industrial production, which represents about 45 per cent of the nation's output of goods and services, is now at its highest level since the early spring of last year, and some 3 per cent above its nadir in August.

But areas of weakness will persist and it is felt that the de-stocking process will continue for some months with no significant moves by either stockholders or customers towards re-stocking the shelves by the second half of this year.

The BSC, faced with a loss of £340m in the current financial year and attempting to secure agreement with unions on the need to reduce manning levels, is planning to introduce a round of price increases at intervals over the next few weeks. This is in line with indications of hardening demand in certain sectors.

Mechanical engineers' gloom, however, persists and it is felt that the de-stocking process will continue for some months with no significant moves by either stockholders or customers towards re-stocking the shelves by the second half of this year.

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### Proposals for Crown Agents' stake in Australia

By Margaret Walters

The Government may be asked to assume responsibility for the Crown Agents' substantial interest in Australia. This is thought to be one of a number of proposals which will be aired in the wake of the long-promised Government White Paper on the future role and structure of the Agents which is expected within the next four or five weeks.

It seems likely that the new incorporated body, which should come into being in about 18 months, will be restricted to its traditional activities of project management, procurement, recruitment and deposit taking on behalf of overseas principals. It is unlikely that it will include the Australian interests, where it has unfunded future financing liabilities of around £60m.

It is clear, however, that the Crown Agents take the view that disinvestment at this stage, when the Australian property market is extremely weak, would result in disastrous losses. The feeling is that there is every prospect of making a good profit out of the Australian companies, owned jointly with Capital & Counties, over the next seven to 10 years.

This is considered to be one of the few opportunities for the Agents to make a substantial amount of the £85m government grant made in December, 1974, on a recoverable basis.

One of the speculative ideas is that the National Enterprise Board, whose chairman Lord Ryder, was formerly a director of MBPC, the second largest United Kingdom property group, or another Government agency, might take over these interests.

This might have some logic given that the Australian financing requirement is the single largest item in the further government grant that is certain to be made when the Agents finally incorporate. Reports that this grant would be of about £75m were described as "highly speculative" by an Agents' spokesman yesterday.

If the White Paper suggests that the organization's making services on a contractual basis, the amount needed for a new capital base might be less than the £30m figure previously indicated.

Shedding of the Australian burden would be a major influence on the eventual outcome of present negotiations over the Crown Agents' holding in English and Continental Property, the private company jointly owned with Mr Jack Walker and Mr Ramon Greene.

### Three new finds may give Egypt major oil role

Cairo, Jan 15.—Three promising discoveries of oil in the Gulf of Suez may represent a big step towards Egypt becoming a major oil producer, according to Egyptian Oil Ministry sources.

They said the discoveries were made by the American Oil Company (Amoco), a subsidiary of Standard Oil of Indiana. Amoco officials declined comment.

Ministry sources said tests were continuing to determine productivity. The new finds were expected to triple production from the present 32,000 barrels a day to 1,000 million barrels, the goal Egypt had set for 1980.

One find south of Ras Ghareb, abandoned by a Lebanese company three years ago, tested in 1974, produced 2,000 barrels a day, according to the semi-official daily, *Al-Ahram*.

It quoted Amoco's partner, the government-run Gulf of Suez Petroleum Company, as saying the new formations at 10,000 feet were similar to July and Ramadan fields, at present the most productive in the Gulf.

### Record Wall St deals

Trading on the New York Stock Exchange yesterday was the busiest on record, with 38.4 million shares changing hands. Early gains were wiped out and the Dow Jones industrial average closed 5.12 points down at 924.51.

Market report, page 21

### Dearer cement

Cement prices are to go up by 6.6 per cent on January 26, provided the Price Commission raises no objection. A spokesman for the Cement Makers' Federation said manufacturers should know by today whether the increase could be made.

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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

## The Bank's interest rate strategy

return to the banks of special deposits was constructed by the discount yesterday as a clear sign the Bank of England does not intend to raise interest rates to rise, almost certainly would money markets were left to their own devices over the week or two. How strongly are pointers are in the direction is much less however.

yesterday's showing there for a 3 point drop in lending rate, if not all point that some had anticipated earlier. But bank's move, ironically, help to prevent the infighting through the banks' base rates.

re has been much confusion just how onerous for banks the tax-gathering was going to be this year because nobody seems to know how much tax is owing. The Corporation could be nearly 50 per cent down on last year's tax bill, but the drain on liquidity arising in recent out of heavy gilt-edged is not hard to see why this might have had some about the easier trend in rates being reversed in part.

as I noted on Tuesday, there was such reluctance to follow the lead of Lloyd's in base rates immediately after the last drop in the added impact of the £500m or more of the banks can now be felt that their unity is fully shared by the and hence more than one. On the view that the deposit release is not to do much more than the upward pressure, banks seem likely to hold hands for the moment the picture becomes

might not be until after 10, at which point it is expected that the money rate will be becoming easier to its own momentum. But then it is questionable how far the money market have to go. There are in the market who expect interest rates picking up at the end of February, who read the temporary of special deposits as a device to enable overnight banks to bring in the going good.

### Eastwood

variations in the price of poultry compared with

eat have a dramatic impact in J. B. Eastwood's per-

formance in the first half of his financial year, but

egg prices slipped

production costs, and the

slumped £1.4m into the

in the 26 weeks to Sep-

26 last, however, price

helped to convert 1974

loss into a £4.1m pre-tax

This is nearly a fifth

than Eastwood's forecast

turnover, and the shares

up to 67p.

£5m plus turn-around in

has been achieved on

up from £45.8m to £53.9m,

fairly evenly spread be-

increased volume and

prices. Even after a

tax charge, compared

£715,000 tax credit in

distributable earnings

to 8.6p a share, well

ing the interim gross divi-

1.77p a share.

more than three months

second half, Eastwood

ident that fine profits

are very satisfactory, be-

ing unable to predict

or egg prices with any

y, they shy away from

making any firm profits forecast. Still, it is clear that the group could well better 1974's record £5.9m pre-tax, pushing the shares, at 67p, on to a prospective p/e ratio of under 4.5 and a prospective yield of 7.9 per cent.

This rating leaves scope for a further improvement in the share price. But Eastwood's earnings remain sensitive to poultry price movements and to grain costs, neither of which it can influence significantly. It can influence the exceptionally volatile pattern of trading which keeps the shares at the speculative level of the market.

Interim: 1975-76 (1974-75)

Capitalization £15.2m

Sales £53.93m (£45.82m)

Pre-tax profits £4.07m

Dividend gross 1.77p (1.62p)

China Clays

Demand

patterns

English China Clays' profits

fell by 17 per cent in the

second half, following an 84

per cent drop in the opening

months. But the overall de-

cline was less severe than the

market feared and the shares

strengthened 24p to 73p.

One of the big factors at

work here was the fine sum-

mer. This enabled clay to be

produced more readily and

more economically. So although

demand was falling sharply,

particularly from the paper in-

dustry, the costs side of the

equation was more favourable

than expected. The traditional

fall in demand during the July

and August holiday months was

also less severe than usual.

Nevertheless, the fact that

profits from clay fell by 23

per cent from £13.3m to

£10.3m reflects the slump in

demand from the paper industry

at home and abroad. Nearly 80

per cent of ECC's clay output

is exported and about three-

quarters of the total output is

for the paper industry.

Fine weather also helped the

quarries division, where

profits rose 15 per cent to £4.7m,

and, building work was very

robust, the costs side of the

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Nevertheless, the fact that

profits from clay fell by 23

per cent from £13.3m to

£10.3m reflects the slump in

longer-term, but in the meantime there is still considerable growth potential in Holland, while the current year will take the group into the agency business in the United States. Good though the overseas results are, the more pleasing surprise at this stage is how well the group has held up in the home market. All save a few days of the spending spree ahead of the May VAT increase fell in the second half of last year, but the group has still managed to push retailing profits marginally higher to £10.4m, despite carrying most of the start-up costs on the 18 per cent increase in selling space coming on stream this year. Tight cost control, good buying and a changing product mix are the main explanations, with lines such as calculators and cameras doing especially well. Better still, however, has been the near doubling of processing profits to £389,000, reflecting improved techniques, good summer weather and the disappearance of some of the more cut-throat competition.

With a good Christmas behind it and an apparently successful start to its move into watches, Dixons' domestic retailing profits in the second half should be reasonable, though not up to last year's exceptionally good level. That could take the group up to not so very far short of the £5m mark for the full year, indicating a prospective p/e ratio of around 8 with the "A" at 66p—a modest enough rating for the shares to remain a medium term buy against the market.

Interim: 1975-76 (1974-75)

Capitalization £12.7m

Sales £32.6m (£29.1m)

Pre-tax profits £2.75m (£1.95m)

Dividend gross 1.15p (0.55p)

Ocean

Riding the

recession

While Ocean Transport has

been strong recently relative to

a weak shipping sector, the

terms of the rights issue

announced yesterday were

sufficiently attractive to generate

more enthusiasm. And that

enthusiasm was compounded by

a revised forecast for the year

just ended of profits £1m higher

than anticipated in the interim

statement, at £2.2m pre-tax.

So Ocean's efforts to contain

the problems created by the

slackness of world trade are

proving successful, with the dip

from the record £29m of 1974

principally a matter of reduced

performance in the container

business, by the container

OCL and Panoscan, which are

now forecast to contribute £12m

pre-tax (against £16.8m in 1974

and £10.5m in the year before

that), of which some £1.3m is

attributed to a change in

accounting dates.

At this stage, however, last

year's figures are relevant only

in so far as they prove the

quality of Ocean's management

and confirm the faith of its

followers. The element of dilu-

tion is unlikely to be offset by

profits growth this year, even

if the worst of the recession is

over.

Ocean's overall return on

capital employed was under 10

per cent even in 1974, but since

the group plans to use the new

money for investment in the

core liner fleet—taking advan-

tage of the depressed state of

the shipbuilding industry—it

will be some time before it pro-

duces a comparable return. So

earnings per share are likely

to be down again this year. But

the balance sheet is now

extremely strong, and that will

pose no threat to the dividend

total, which is to be increased

It is just possible that the British shipping lines which opened up trade with East Africa when that part of the world was colonized under Queen Victoria, and have played a dominant part in keeping it open since, will be forced out of it within five years. The boat on whose toe they may be ejected belongs to what some regard as the world's latest colonialist, the Soviet Union.

It is a typical old established medium size cargo liner route, whose trade consists mainly of manufactured goods being shipped south from Britain and Europe and primary products heading northwards such as sisal, tea, coffee, and the like from Kenya, Uganda, Zambia and Tanzania.

Some 30 to 40 ships of a dozen lines under various flags move about two and a half million tons in the course of the year, earning about £75m in freight. About 15 of the ships are British and four Polish and East German, the latter having been chartered to the conference after a five year freight war since 1972.

Last September Russia announced that it was entering the trade with an initial 12 ships at rates up to 30 per cent below those of the conference line. The declared intention was to capture an eventual 30 per cent of a trade in which Russia has little direct interest in terms of her own exports and imports, though no doubt a strong political one.

The conference line has been forced to respond by reducing rates to a level at which they barely cover cash outgoings and which would clearly not be sustainable in the longer term.

Since firms like British & Commonwealth are not in shipping to make regular losses, the possibility is of a steady attrition of Britain's stake in her own trade to that part of the world and a steady growth of Russia's.

That is just one example of what is rapidly becoming shipping's public enemy No 1: the

## Michael Baily examines the implications of communist expansion on the world's cargo routes



The Russian ship Volgoles when on a visit to Britain with a cargo of timber.

threat of communist expansion on world liner shipping routes (flags of convenience and flag discrimination have faded in prominence).

The alarm bells have been ringing for some time in countries like the United States, West Germany, and The Netherlands and today British shipping jumps in with an uncharacteristically forthright pamphlet, *Red Ensign versus Red Flag* which ministers, MPs, trade unions and shippers will receive in the next few days.

It gives warning that though the Comecon block generates about 5 per cent of international trade its liner fleet, through rapid expansion, is already over 10 per cent of the world's total, and could approach 20 per cent within five years.

The surplus is increasingly available to create disruption in other trades and is in the process of doing so, as Russia's rather old fashioned fleet is replaced by a greater tonnage of bigger, faster, container and roll ships many of which it is believed, could operate efficiently in either a military or commercial role.

Comecon shipping has already made big inroads into the Pacific and Atlantic trades. It recently proved the *Linovye* Bill, at present before Congress, which would require foreign

lines to justify artificially low rates to the Federal Maritime Commission—the threat of which has already had a sobering effect on Russian activities in at least one United States shipping trade.

What West European shipping wants is a firm coordinated line by their governments along with others before the big fleet of ships being built and on order for Russia inflicts even greater damage over the next decade.

It must have cost British shipping a good deal of heart-searching before mounting this particular campaign because the Russians are trying to do it in some respects only what British shipping has been doing so successfully for over a century: carrying goods between third parties.

Cross-trading, as it is called, still represents probably about 40 per cent of the total earnings of British liner shipping after more than a decade of growing nationalism on world trade routes in which developing countries have demanded substantial new carrying rights in many trades.

This trend is now likely to be accentuated by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's new liner code giving 40 per cent each to the ships of bilateral trading partners and 20 per cent to

most influential sector of the world shipping industry.

These interests can however, be advanced only at the expense of others, and if fears of Russian domination of world liner shipping by the 1980s are exaggerated, western shipping interests certainly stand to suffer heavily—Britain alone could nearly £2,000m from shipping in 1974. So while Russia's united advance against divided opposition has had great success so far, the first stirrings are undoubtedly taking place towards a common response by western governments.

Britain is already equipped to respond through the Merchant Shipping Act empowering the Government, for example, to impose levies on Russian ships entering British ports that would cancel out any cut rates they chose to offer, or even to ban them from ports altogether.

Such powers are unlikely to be used unilaterally, however, not only for fear of retaliation but because to deprive British shippers of cheap rates still enjoyed by their foreign competitors could inflict greater damage than the measures sought to remove. So the first necessity is seen as concerted action with other governments both in taking powers and in agreeing if necessary to use them.

If this emerges over the next five years as the essential alternative to the atrophy of British and other liner shipping Russia will be able to take credit for bringing about a degree of unity among western states and between the governments and shipping industries of these states that never seemed possible in former days, when governments thought shipping a low priority and shipping thought governments best kept out of their affairs.

And if in the process that still cherished but already much tarnished ideal, the freedom of the seas, takes a further knock, well—*c'est la guerre*.

## Plugging the N Sea platforms into the telephone network

Kenneth Owen  
Technology  
correspondent

The 100-mile gap between the Shetland Islands and Mobil's Beryl oilfield platform to the east was "bridged" yesterday by a novel method of communications. Using an over-the-horizon radio transmission technique known as tropospheric scatter, it is the first step in a major expansion of Post Office services to include regular contact with the North Sea oil and gas production platforms.

The Beryl platform, the first to be connected to the automatic dialling public network, has now been given Aberdeen telephone numbers. Mobil's staff on board now have access to the full range of public telephone, telex and data services as required.

North Sea communications generally have demanded a fairly urgent response from the Post Office, as the exploration phase is being succeeded by production in the various fields.

Sir Edward Pennessy, deputy chairman of the Post Office, said yesterday that offshore communications had been given top priority because of the vital importance of North Sea oil and gas to Britain's economy. By "bridging the gap" he said, the service had been implemented in just over a year, despite technical difficulties.

Because the platforms are out at sight of the mainland, ordinary line-of-sight microwave radio links could not be used without repeater stations. But another concept—meta-

volume and consistent quality of transmission that is needed, high-frequency radio also was ruled out.

Tropospheric scatter was chosen to solve the problem. According to Marconi Communications Systems, the GEC company which has supplied the "tropo" equipment for both the Post Office and the oil companies, the method is "the ideal solution for communication from distances of just beyond the horizon up to 500 miles".

In essence, the technique is to bounce the radio transmissions off a part of the troposphere (the lower part of the atmosphere) which is visible from both the transmitting and receiving sites. In fact the process is not simply one of reflection, there is a complex "scattering" of the signals in the troposphere.

Post Office ground stations at Scousburgh in the Shetland Islands and at Mormond Hill, near Fraserburgh, Aberdeen-shire, have been set up to act as main offshore terminals for the North Sea service. The Beryl platform is linked to Scousburgh, from where the signals are relayed by a second over-the-horizon tropo link to Mormond Hill and hence into the inland network.

But another concept—meta-

present—may prove to have an important role in the development of North Sea energy resources. Instead of scattering signals through the troposphere, this other system would relay them via a satellite orbiting at geostationary height over the equator.

Such satellites already carry large volumes of telecommunications traffic as a matter of routine in the global network set up by the Intelsat organization. They relay telephone, television, telex and data traffic across the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. Indeed, a link from Norway to North Sea platforms is already in use via a leased transponder (a receiver-transmitter unit) on board an Intelsat spacecraft.

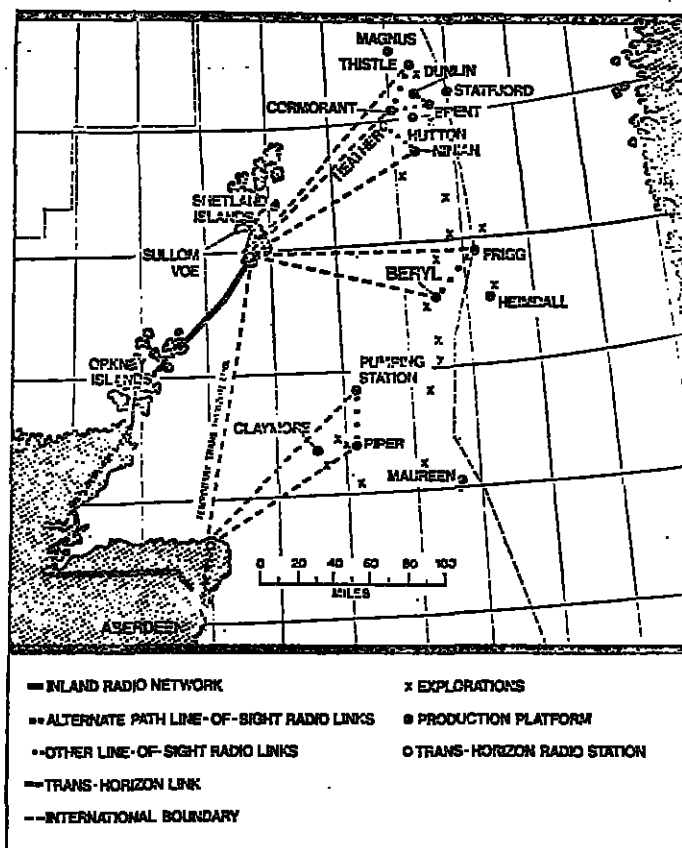
The global satellite system is now being complemented by domestic and regional communication satellites which focus their transmissions along narrow beams to cover particular countries or other areas.

In Europe, the launch of the Orbital Test Satellite (OTS) in 1977 is expected to be followed by the introduction of first-generation European regional communication satellites in the early 1980s. These satellites will largely provide traditional communication services such as telephone and television distribution, via one or two large earth stations in each participating country.

But these main services could be complemented in future European spacecraft by a variety of specialized wideband (high capacity) services. These would use smaller earth stations, located close to the traffic origins.

One of these specialized services, it is envisaged by the European Space Agency (which is developing the spacecraft), is likely to be a communication service covering the North Sea oil and gas fields. And it emerged at a recent international telecommunications conference, the agency has already done much detailed work on this.

The starting point is the European Communications Satellite (ECS) series of operational spacecraft which will





## FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

## Stock markets

## Special deposits cut boosts flagging shares

For the second day running encouraging lunchtime news breathed fresh life into the London stock market just as it looked to be running out of steam.

This time both gilts and equities took their cue to go ahead from the 1 per cent cut in special deposits, even though it is only effective for three weeks. Equities, though just below their best, stayed firm to the end and the FT Index closed 4.6 better at 403.3. The "tap" of the day was recorded at 2 p.m. when the advance was 5.2 points.

Gilts had another extremely busy and eventful day. The market was dominated by the news that the prospective short-dated "tap". Treasury 91 per cent 1980, would not be operated as a "tap" because of heavy applications. Although this helped sentiment it was accompanied by a serious shortage of liquidity, which prevented prices advancing much. "Shorts" fluctuated narrowly in hectic trading. They moved up and down three times and it was difficult for dealers to decide at any point in the day whether prices were above or beneath overnight levels. The news that the Bank of England was to release special deposits helped prices, but the tone was easier in after-hours trading and most stocks were eventually only 1/16 or 1 point up on the day.

"Longs" were busier than on Wednesday and, like "shorts", saw repeated changes

in the intensity of demand and supply. They were finally 1 point up in most cases. Yet again Wayburn proved to be the star of a firm engineering pitch and, indeed, of the whole

market. Continuing to benefit from its good result and rights issue, the shares shot up another 23p to 515p, a figure which compares with 62p at the start of last year. Others to feature in the sector were Tube Investments, up 6p to 276p, and Turner & Newall, better by 5p to 165p. News of a Middle East order for a subsidiary helped Reynolds Parsons to go ahead 11p to 86p.

Against the background of a very firm Wall Street, the industrial leaders were firm, both late in the official session and after hours. The pick were Fibers, up 10p to 406p, Hawker Siddeley 8p to 402p, Beecham 4p to 351p and ICI 3p to 366p. But following its recent fashion Unilever stayed at a subdued 442p.

The banks moved little after an initial firming with the special deposits news. The best were Midland 28p and National Westminster 26p, both ahead by 3p, while Barclays firmed a point less to 322p and Lloyds was 2p to the good at 212p.

Insurance shares were led up by a gain of 8p, to 248p, from Pearl. Others to feature were Refuse "A", 5p to 245p, and Lecal & General 4p to 146p.

News of an office block deal in Melbourne by British Land, up 31p to 30p, was the spur to the property pitch, where the most successful were Hammerston, better by 7p to 377p, Land Securities, firmer by 5p to 191p, and Berkeley Hamro, a good share of late and ahead another 5p to 115p.

The fully-underwritten £23m cash call by Ocean Transport, which was coupled with a profit forecast, helped the shares to go ahead a point to 140 1/2p, while P&O were again in demand and rose 2p to 107p.

BP, with whom Ocean announced a tanker deal on Wednesday, was a depressed major on the oil pitch and lost 13p to 590p. The problem here is unconfirmed reports of trouble over the Alaska pipeline. Shell, on the other hand, shaded easier at 395p.

Food shares had a good day with Tate & Lyle, where results are due soon, better by 4p to

273p, and Reckitt & Colman improving 2p to 347p. A return to profits helped J. S. Eastwood to go ahead 3p to 67p, while a joint pig-rearing venture left both Sainsbury 125p and Pauls & Whites 73p unchanged.

Golds, though quiet, managed gains of up to 25p behind the higher metal price. Elsewhere in the sector De Beers were hit by a "bear squeeze" and rose 10p to 334p and Pan Continental continued to benefit from the hope of uranium orders, firming 56p to £10.50.

Reports that a Jersey company had built up a stable stake had Rensard 7p better at 20p, and some favourable comment boosted Crellon 4 1/2p to 341p. Other firm spots included Royal Worcester 128p, Caplan Profile 53p and Vibroplant 106p, the gains being 6p, 4p and 2p respectively.

Paper shares were in some demand, with the result that Bowater gained 5p to 189p, East Lanes Paper 4p to 47p and Associated Newspapers 3p to 117p.

The best of companies reporting results was Denbyware, which had a jump of 14p to 142p. British Electric Traction was 2p better to 96p, while Redland's dividend announcement was good for a 3p gain to 111p. Kimpher's loss had the shares 2p off at 24p, but the market was pleasantly surprised by Dixon's Photographic, the first company of its type to report a full six months since the high VAT rate came into

force. The "A" shares were 3p to the good at 66p.

Random features were a 6p advance to 228p for stockjobbers Akroyd & Smithers, still gaining strength from the boom in gilts, a 14p rise to 171p for Guthrie after yield considera-

At 35p, Spencer Clark Metal Industries still stand well below an asset value of 56p, yield 8 per cent and sell at only 3 times earnings. But the latest figures showed a good increase in profits and the shares look out of line.

After hours trading saw very little activity in equities in spite of the strength of New York. Government stocks were marked up one-eighth at the long end on news that the new short "tap" will not be used as such.

Equity turnover on January 14 was £84.48m (20,390 bargains). Active stocks yesterday, according to Exchange Telegraph, were ICI, Barclays Bank, BP, Marks & Spencer, Shell, Commercial Union, Pearl Assurance, Thorn "A", Ladbroke, Beecham, Penard Group, Turner & Newall, J. S. Eastwood, Hanson Trust, Tate & Lyle, Reckitt & Colman, A. Bell, LRC International and Crellon.

## Latest dividends

Company (and par value)	Ord div	Year ago	Pay date	Year's total	Prev year
Albion (20p) Int	1.25	1.25	1/6	2.06	2.05
B.E.T. (25p) Int	1.4	1.4	1/4	4.25	4.25
Denbyware (25p) Int	2.11	2.01	8/4	4.98	4.98
Dixons (10p) Int	0.75	0.75	1/5	1.95	0.95
Eag China Clay Fin	1.34	1.27	2/4	2.21	2.07
Gulfair Int	42.5c	37.5c	10/3c	51.50	51.50
Kimpher (10p) Int	—	1.0	1/4	3.5	3.0
Ley's Foundries Fin	2.45	1.4	1/4	2.45	2.45
Ldn & Montrose (25p) Int	1.0	1.0	1/4	4.0	4.0
Louis Newmark (25p) Int	1.5	1.5	2/3	4.97	4.97
P'mouth & Sunderland Int	0.87	0.87	29/2	2.34	2.34
Redland (25p) Int	1.58	1.04	1/4	3.40	2.86
Spencer Clark (30p) Fin	1.15	1.2	1/4	1.95	1.8
A. J. Worthington (5p) Int	0.25	0.24	—	0.58	0.58

Dividends in this table are shown net of tax on pence per share. Elsewhere in Business News dividends are shown on a gross basis. To establish gross, multiply the net dividend by 1.54. \*Forecast.

## BET goes ahead at half time but tax is unusually heavy

By John Brennan

As a holding company with interests stretching from television rentals to laundries, and from printing to passenger transport, what British Electric Traction loses on the swings it tends to recoup on the roundabouts. And despite continued losses from its mining and civil engineering side, BET turned in slightly improved profits for the half year to the end of September last. At the pre-tax level profits reached £19.5m on a turnover of £38.5m ahead at £205.6m.

Apert from the continued problems with the Murphree Brothers mining operation and a sharp downturn in Thames Television's profits, contribu-

tions from BET's subsidiary and associate companies improved steadily in the half year. Rediffusion, Advance Laundries, the Edison Plant, Grayston and J. D. White plant hire companies, and the freight and transport losses on the roundabouts, all improved.

Overseas losses incurred by Rediffusion, which could not be offset against United Kingdom profits, led to a higher than normal tax charge. And BET's normal tax charge, at an effective 56 per cent rate, amounting to £11.04m. An interim dividend of 2.15p gross is proposed on the deferred ordinary share capital, the same as 1974's interim pay-out. Holders of the 6 per cent Cumulative Participating Preference

shares are to be paid 2.1p gross per share, and 2.8p gross will be paid to holders of the 3 per cent Non-Cumulative Preferred Ordinary shares.

Although the group is now some three and a half months into the second half of its financial year, it falls to give any forecast of full year profits. However, at the time of its last accounts, which were published last September, BET's chairman, Sir John Spencer Willis, commented that "indications so far have been that our results should be no worse than, and indeed might show an improvement on, those for the past year." Group pre-tax profits in 1974-75 amounted to £37.8m.

## Kimpher revival hopes crash

The ups and downs of advertising can be sharp and sudden. Take Kimpher, the London-based agency with interests in publishing and market services. It reports a pre-tax loss of £160,000 for the first six months to last September 30.

Last year the group recovered well in the second half, after interim profits had crashed from £165,000 to £19,000. The final outcome was £190,000, and the board was confident. Shareholders get no interim payment against 1.49p the year before.

The board says the poor results reflected recession, which forced some clients to cut back sharply. Recruitment advertising suffered an "unparalleled collapse", and altogether the group lost more than £200,000 in gross revenue. Unlet property in the current year will cost about £125,000.

The board says the group is now trading profitably. However, second half profits are unlikely to cover the interim loss because they will bear the cost of terminating various management contracts. Mr Len Heath, joint managing director for development activities has left the company and Mr Brian Palmer, a director, has also gone.

## Takeovers in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has nationalized 10 British commercial companies, with an estimated balance sheet value of £15.5m in relation to the holding in London of the proceeds of tea sales by Sri Lankan estates nationalized at the end of last year.

The new wave of nationalization strikes a discordant note to the resumption of talks next week between the Sri Lanka government and representatives of the Ceylon Association on compensation terms for the nationalization of the tea estates.

At the centre of the latest nationalization is Ovah Highfields, a United Kingdom based and quoted company, six of whose tea plantations were nationalized last year. It has a subsidiary called Colombo Commercial Company (Agency), Federal Securities, an unquoted Bahamas based company, has a

total 33 per cent stake in Ovah. Federal Securities also has a wholly owned London based company, Colombo Commercial Company (CCC), whose subsidiaries have now been nationalized.

Mr J. R. M. Collins, managing director of Ovah and a director of CCC subsidiaries said yesterday CCC did not have any interest in Ovah although there were three common directorships.

He said CCC's companies had been nationalized after the boards of the tea plantations over which CCC had no control had decided to retain the proceeds of the last tea shipments immediately prior to nationalization last year in separate bank accounts in London. Mr Collins said the nationalization affected the whole of CCC's activities and the companies had a balance sheet fixed asset value of £25m.

## Hovercraft stars at Westland

Sir David Collins, chairman of Westland Aircraft, predicts another record year for the Yeovil-based helicopter, hovercraft, aircraft equipment and light engineering group. Pre-tax profits in the year to last September 30 were £7.2m. In the annual report, Sir David says "great opportunities face the group", and nothing will be spared in grasping them.

The report shows that exports soared from £55m to £55.5m, representing more than half the group's turnover. Sir David says efforts are being made to improve the helicopter sector's profitability, which contributed £3.7m against £3.3m before tax. However, the return on funds employed was only 9.4 per cent. Against this, the hovercraft division produced a 22.7 per cent return on funds, with profits up from £1.7m to £2.1m. In July, the group proposed a three-for-two rights issue at 33p to raise about £4.4m.

The board, under Mr G. Robinson, reports growth in all major markets and strong order books. Over the whole of last year the group made record profits of £12m, against £983,000.

## Denbyware up 63 pc with more to come

"Solid growth" is forecast for the full year at Denbyware, the Derby-based pottery group. There was also a rise of 63 per cent in pre-tax profits to £820,000 in the six months to September 27 with £36,000 from an investment sale. Group sales went up from £2.8m to £4.2m. Shareholders will collect an interim dividend of 3.24p, against 2.99p.

The board, under Mr G. Robinson, reports growth in all major markets and strong order books. Over the whole of last year the group made record profits of £12m, against £983,000.

## Celtic Haven better

Thanks chiefly to good trading by its farming offshoot, the pre-tax profits of Celtic Haven (formerly Celtic Haven Farms) moved from £15,000 to £26,000 in the first-half year to September 30. Some allowance is made in the interim results for season losses on the farm in the second-half, and starting-up losses at Barn Lake Engineering. The group is a supplier of ancillary services to the Celtic Sea offshore oil industry.

## Albion not downcast

There was second-half loss of £181,000, against a pre-tax profit of £89,000 at Albion, the men's outerwear group. This meant a fall of 32 per cent for the year to September 30 to £238,000. The dividend is 2.06p, set again implying a rise from 3.07p gross to 3.17p.

The board is confident that when trade begins to pick up again, the group will be well equipped for further growth.

## Metal Box in Germany

United Kingdom group—Metal Box has bought a 49 per cent stake in the family owned metal container company Frick and Nackle, at Braunschweig.

## Issues &amp; Loans

biggest maker of agricultural and plumbing equipment. It also makes castings and machinery. The debentures would fall due in 1982 in the US, Europe and the Middle East.

The underwriting syndicate will be managed by Smith, Barney and Nikko Securities International and the debentures would be convertible immediately into Kubota ordinary stock or into registered American or bearer European depositary receipts.

Meanwhile, Peugeot SA, the French car maker, plans to float a Eurofranc loan of about 100m francs (£11m). The coupon reportedly will be 10 per cent over 7 years.

The Industrial and Mining Development Bank of Iran (IMDI) plans to offer £30m (£15m) of debentures on or around January 26.

## Peak £2m from Ley's Foundries

After a big improvement in the first six months (against a period depressed by the three-day week), Ley's Foundries & Engineering did even better in the full year to September 30. Pre-tax profits virtually doubled from £1.2m to a best-ever £2.19m, the first time £2m has been topped. Turnover rose from £17.5m to £24.99m. Earnings a stock unit duly went up from 5.03p to 9.58p, and the total dividend from 3.69p gross to 5.39p.

Seven months ago Mr Francis Ley, chairman, pointed out that its largest subsidiary, Ley's Malleable Castings, normally earned a lower profit in the second-half covering summer holidays. Difficulties in the motor industry were also expected to be a hindrance. However, the other two offshoots, Ewart Chainbelt and W. Shaw were scheduled to perform much better in the closing months.

## Honda results likely to beat expectations

Honda Motor of Japan has stated that it would report better than expected results for the latter half of the current year, ending February 29. The credit would go to a favourable level of car sales both at home and abroad.

## N Midland Constr

Having turned in record profits for the year to August 31 of £293,000 against £205,000 North Midland Construction reports another good start in the present year. Major T. G. Moyle, chairman, withholds a forecast for the full year (there are fears that the total workload throughout the industry might fall) but even so he is confident. The policy of selective tendering, tight control and a greatly improved method of contracting has ensured that profit margins are not eroded.

## A J Worthington slips

Leek-based maker of textile products A. J. Worthington (Holdings) slipped in the six months to September 30. On turnover of £565,000 against £500,000 pre-tax profit fell from £71,000 to £64,000 and earnings a share from 1.648p to 1.467p. The interim payment is 0.38p.

## Lunova earnings up

Operations for the year to December 31 of Lunova Textile Rubberies fell from £44,000 to £41,000, earnings a stock unit rose from 2.69p to 2.98p, and the net value a stock unit from 4.0p to 6.6p. No account was taken of the investment in Sri Lanka, pending the outcome of compensation claims.

## BEST AND MAY

For six months to end-October 1975 sales fell from £1.20m to £1.181m. Pre-tax profit £28,500 (£105,000). Interim dividend is 1.084p (0.66p).

## Motor-Columbus, Baden, plans to float a 7 per cent bond

of 50m Swiss francs (£24m) due 1986.

## Olivetti wants \$20m

Following the temporary return to the Eurodollar market of Italian borrower Olivetti is now raising the first Italian industrial company loan for over 12 months. The 3-year, \$20m loan, at a spread over interbank rate of 1 1/2 per cent, has been arranged by Euroamerica International Bank, Interunion Banque, and Banque de L'Union Europeenne.

## EUROFIRMA

Company's 75m florin bond (100m) was at a 6.5 per cent coupon has been priced at 100.

## NORSK HYDRO AS

Company's \$30m 10-year 9 1/2 per cent Eurobond has been priced at 100.

## Federation of Hongkong exchanges talk merger

The Federation of Hongkong Stock Exchanges is discussing the principle of having only one exchange in place of the present four. Mr McInnes, the assistant commissioner for securities, is looking at the matter and promises to report in about six weeks.

Only "suggestions and possibilities" have emerged so far but the investigation is to improve the international acceptance of the Hongkong market and to reduce the number of brokers from over 1,000 to possibly three or four hundred. Key questions include what the relative value of seats at the existing exchanges and compensation for retiring brokers and listed companies.

Brokers' uncertainties include what attitude the Hongkong Stock Exchange, which is the longest-established and which quotes only the major stocks, and the Far East Exchange, which accounts for nearly half the total turnover, would take to a merger. The other two exchanges are the Kowloon and the Kam Ngan.

The Government has for some time had proposals from local brokers on option trading, but it is thought to be waiting for the planned Commodity Exchange to start up and ease public fears of speculation, before taking a position on options, brokers sources added. In any case, the merger of Hongkong stocks which are sufficiently large and well known internationally for option trading is small, Reuters.

## Production up 4 pc at Palabora

Copper production at South Africa's Palabora mine, which Rio Tinto-Zinc has a 30 per cent stake, rose by 4 per cent to 96,229 tonnes for the year to the end of December while sales rose 15 per cent from 85,569 tonnes in 1974 to 97,744 tonnes. The average copper grade remained the same at 0.55 per cent in both years although in the final quarter of last year it was stepped up to 0.58 per cent.

Sales of magnetite were heavily down for the year as 55,286 tonnes due to lack of adequate rail facilities at handling problems at Lourenco Marques, although conditions improved in the final quarter.

## L. Newmark set to make up leeway

Electronic and precision engineer Louis Newmark reports pre-tax profits of £734,000 for the half year to last September. These are 20 per cent better than in the same months the year before. The group also expects a similar second half showing, pointing to £1.15m for the year. This would make a good deal of the leeway following the preceding year's setback from a record £1.5m to £1.26m.

In the half year to September 27, the turnover moved from £7.2m to £7.88m, and earnings a share from 9.31p to 11.3p. The half-time payment is 2.2p gross against 2.23p.

## K Shoes buoyant

Demand at K Shoes has to up well, Mr Spencer Crookenden, chairman, says in an annual report. The chief manufacturing offshoot, Sumner Brothers, contributed more in the previous year, than not so much as in the current year of 1973. All nine factories are now operating at full capacity. The K Shoe shops in Holland are also doing well.

## Lunova earnings up

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Company's \$30m 10-year 9 1/2 per cent Eurobond has been priced at 100.



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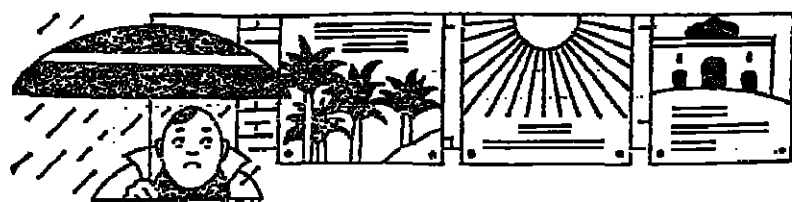


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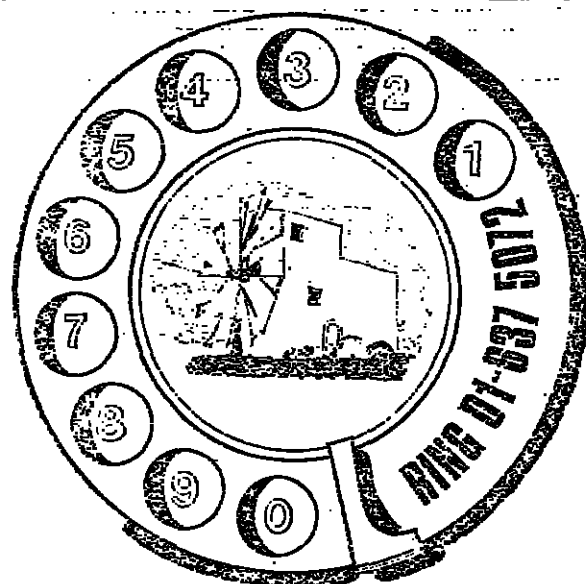
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## A bad year for the bosses?

Mr Denis Healey is unlikely to have made many new friends among higher salary earners as a result of his recent hints that the next incomes policy will provide a fairer deal for hard-working executives. Most executives feel rightly or wrongly that they are personally bearing the brunt of the current battle against inflation. And an equal number apparently look to the future with similar cynicism.

It is widely felt that the £6 a week policy will be replaced with a flat-rate limit and a percentage increase which will do little to cushion salary earners from an accelerated decline in living standards.

The consultants Lloyd Executive, who this week published the results of their latest investigation into the disappearing earnings of City executives, predict that 1976 will be a crunching year for middle managers whatever the next incomes policy.

Their report claims that more and more executives in the capital are facing real personal crises as cutbacks on luxuries become exhausted after two years of pruning. Many professionals, it says, will be forced to look for new appointments out of sheer financial necessity.

In fact, out of 170 City firms surveyed for the report, more than 25 per cent were confidently expecting an increase in labour turnover over during this year as a result of employees seeking better pay.

A study of employees' earnings in the firms covered showed that salaries

increased on average only 18.1 per cent in 1975 compared with an average rise for all employees in Britain of 24.7 per cent and a rise in the Retail Prices Index of 25.3 per cent.

Broken down into individual categories, the consultancy profession was seen to fare best, with average increases of 21.2 per cent, followed by merchant and international bank staffs, who secured rises of 20.4 per cent. Average remuneration in industry and general commerce increased by 17.6 per cent, in insurance and banking by 15.1 per cent, and in the legal profession by a mere 14.6 per cent.

The actual decline in standards is underlined by Lloyd's example of the "typical" executive whose living standard is gauged by plotting his disposable income after taking into account his five main family expenditure items—taxation, food, housing, fuel and transport.

The analysis is based on a 32-year-old family man, with an 85 per cent mortgage and a car purchase loan, earning £4,000 in January, 1974, and receiving a 15 per cent salary increase in both 1974 and 1975.

It shows that his disposable income fell by 1 per cent in 1974, and in 1975—when he needed a pay rise of 17 per cent simply to cover increased costs in the five main items—his disposable income fell by 7 per cent in real terms.

Comparing this "typical" executive with his wealthier Common Market counterparts, the report shows that after paying his tax, food, housing, fuel and transport

bills the Briton has about 20 per cent of gross salary left as against his opposite French number's 33 per cent, the German's 35 per cent and the Dutch equivalent's 32 per cent.

The disparity becomes even more glaring when the fact is taken into account that Continental salaries are often up to twice those of British executives.

The highest paid job function recorded in management was that of financial director, with an overall median was £12,500. The only other "general" job function to approach this level was that of marketing director where the median was £11,724.

The median salaries for data processing managers in industry was £6,500 (37 per cent receive company cars) compared with £6,512 in insurance (44 per cent with cars) and £7,000 in banking (11 per cent with cars).

In merchant and international banks highest salaries generally went to money managers with a median of £13,200 followed by operations managers, £9,465, foreign exchange chief dealers, £8,750, investment managers, £8,500 and credit managers, £8,000.

The median salaries of insurance underwriters and brokers were broadly the same at £4,700 and £4,500 respectively but the top earnings of a senior underwriter reached £15,000 as against a maximum of £10,000 for placing brokers.

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